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DRUG DEALERS PUT BEHIND BARS

Report by Rob Cox

THREE men involved in a drugs conspiracy to supply addicts across the Black Country have been jailed for a total of nearly 11 years.

For six months Dishon Cassell and Karem White fueled addiction by supplying heroin and crack cocaine.

The class A drugs were cut, packaged and distributed from a home in Rugeley Close, Tipton, where Cassell's girlfriend was living.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard the third man, Theo White, had only been involved on October 15 last year, the day the enterprise fell apart and the three were arrested.

Cassell, of Belle Vale, Cradley, was handed a four-and-a-half year sentence, while Karem White, of Camden Street, Hockley, was sentenced to three years and nine months. Theo White, of Rubery Drive, Rowley Regis, will serve a two-and-a-half year sentence. They were sentenced last week having admitted conspiracy to supply heroin and crack cocaine.

Undercover

Ms Samantha Powis, prosecuting, told the court the conspiracy was foiled by an undercover police operation centred on the Tipton property and two cars. All three men were arrested on October 15 last year near Hagley Road, Halesowen.

In the Ford Fiesta police found 10 wraps of heroin, a rock of cocaine and two mobile phones. From the Audi, five phones and £1,690 in cash was recovered. Subsequent searches uncovered heroin worth £2,000 at the Tipton home, alongside cocaine, weighing scales and £1,000 cash.

Ms Powis said analysis of the phones showed large amounts of contact between Cassell, aged 24, and Karem White, 21. She told the court: "Cassell was directing the operation in a meaningful role and was giving Karem White instructions and post codes. They were talking about supplies and if stocks were low."

The court heard Cassell had a string of convictions including possession of a weapon, robbery and affray.

Martin Butterworth, defending Cassell, told the court it had not been a sophisticated operation. He said: "Yes, he had the significant role of the three but he was still a foot soldier."

Tom Walkling, defending Karem White, said he was motivated by financial desperation and was on "the last rung of the ladder before the user." Matthew Barnes, defending, said that Theo White, 27, who was on licence when arrested, made a 'poor decision' to get involved.

Judge Andrew Lockhart QC, told the three: "These were highly addictive drugs you were selling. Quite apart from the harm caused to those addicted to them, they cause a great amount of harm in the community by reason of those desperate people carrying out other offences to fund their habits."

TRIBUTE PAID TO MEDIC WHO HELPED DELIVER ELLA



Nigel Goodman, paramedic Nikki Wildman, baby Ella Nicola, Mum Melissa Cavanagh and Dad Paul Yeomans, seen after the birth in a broken lift

A PARAMEDIC who helped deliver a baby in a Rowley Regis block of flats' lift is among dozens of ambulance workers in the West Midlands to receive official compliments from patients.

Melissa Cavanagh named her daughter Ella, as a reminder of the infant's unusual delivery – in an elevator – in July 2013.

The 23-year-old mother called paramedics to her home on the ninth floor of a block of flats after her contractions started. They ruled out using the many flights of stairs to get her to delivery room.

Instead, Ms Cavanagh, her boyfriend Paul Yeomans, aged 25, and the paramedics got into the lift, but it broke down.

After 20 minutes in the hot and cramped

conditions, Ms Cavanagh's contractions became more frequent, and the baby was on its way.

Paramedic Nikki Wildman, was paid tribute by the grateful parents who gave their daughter Nicola as her middle name.

Nikki said: "During the delivery we could hear the fire service desperately trying to get to us.

Hospital

"After about 45 minutes of being trapped, the firefighters managed to prise open the doors and we were able to take Melissa, Paul and their new baby girl to hospital."

Baby Ella was born weighing 2.7kg (6lb 10oz). Ms Cavanagh, said: "The ambulance

staff were really great – they kept me calm and helped me through it."

Nikki was one of three workers at West Midlands Ambulance Service who have received 120 compliments from patients.

The other two were paramedic Matt Harrison, who helped save the life of nine-year-old Kai Brookes, from Cannock, when he suffered an asthma attack then cardiac arrest at his home; and paramedic Cameron McVittie, who was among a team of people who rescued Joel Fowler, aged 19, from Solihull, after a serious car crash.

Claire Brown, spokesman for the West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust said: "It's a superb reflection on our staff."

PARKING

Street restrictions are scaled down

PEOPLE living near Halesowen College could be issued with permits as council bosses look to calm a row over parking.

It comes after chiefs scaled down plans to bring in parking restrictions on a number of roads following a backlash from residents. Areas surrounding the college in Whittingham Road were set to become no-parking zones on mornings and afternoons in a bid to stop students and parents clogging up side streets.

Now Newfield Crescent will become a no waiting zone and there will be limited waiting on part of Whittingham Road.

JOBS

Burger King dishes up move to centre

FAST food chain Burger King has announced plans for a restaurant at The Waterfront, Brierley Hill, creating new jobs.

Dudley Council planners have approved the extension and alteration of an empty retail building in Waterfront Way, off Level Street.

The exact number of new jobs has not yet been revealed by the chain.

Also approved by planners was an application for a car wash for a site at Point West at The Waterfront.

TRAFFIC

Potential delays at Merry Hill roadworks

A NEW set of roadworks near the Merry Hill centre were starting this week, potentially causing hold-ups for shoppers hoping to get to the complex during the half-term holiday.

Resurfacing work at the junction of the A4036 Merry Hill and The Boulevard is being carried out as part of a wider project to ease congestion around the busy centre.

The roadworks are included in a £500,000 scheme to improve traffic flow around Merry Hill by upgrading traffic lights. Work started last month in High Street and Coprice Lane, Quarry Bank.

INSIDE

RARE MEDAL IS SOLD FOR £48K



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Schoolgirl, 14, admits bomb hoax call

A 14-YEAR-OLD from the Black Country who made a hoax bomb call to a school was told by magistrates she had only avoided custody because of her age.

The teenager phoned a school on January 28 and said 'you have 24 minutes to evacuate' after being egged on by a friend to make the threat, a court heard.

The school was evacuated and police were called, Sandwell magistrates were told.

The call was made amid a number of unrelated bomb hoaxes at schools across Sandwell – including Tipton, Wednesbury, West Bromwich and Oldbury.

Schools in Birmingham and Leasowes High School in Halesowen had also been targeted in a wave of hoax calls.

Standing before the court with her mother on Monday, the girl – who cannot be named for legal reasons – choked back tears as she apologised for her 'stupid' behaviour, saying that she had 'immediately regretted' making the call.

The girl from West Bromwich pleaded guilty to communicating false information about a bomb hoax. She was given a 10-month referral order and ordered to pay £135 court costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

She told the magistrates: 'My friend egged

me on to make the call and I was scared that if I didn't she would hit me. I want to say how sorry I am and that I will never do anything stupid like that again. I will choose my friends more wisely.'

Her mother said: 'I am not going to excuse what she has done but you always support your kids. She doesn't cause me any trouble at home. She has really let me down.'

Chairman of the bench, Pastor Richard Brookes, said: 'The only reason you are not being locked up today is because of your age. This order is not to directly punish you but for you to learn from your actions. You caused a huge amount of inconvenience, fear and money to emergency services.'

Car crooks' appeals on sentencing dismissed

A GANG of crooked car breakers who dismantled £240,000 worth of high value stolen vehicles – including Audis and BMWs – and sold them on online auction site eBay, have been told their sentences were not a day too long.

Ringleader Luke Arnold, 31, along with mechanic, Robert Wood, 26, and money man, Duncan Taylor, 47, fenced the cars, many of which were taken during burglaries.

Operating out of workshops in Silverthorne Lane, Bradley Heath, and in Bromsgrove, they disguised the illegal nature of their trade by selling the vehicles bit by bit on the internet.

Wood, of Dawlish Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, and Taylor, of Station Road, Blackwell, Bromsgrove, were each jailed for three and a half years in July last year after pleading guilty to conspiring to handle stolen goods at Birmingham Crown Court. Arnold, of no fixed abode, admitted the same offence and was handed four years eight months behind bars.

Last week all three asked London's Criminal Appeal Court to reduce their sentences. Lawyers for the trio argued that they had not been given enough credit for their guilty plea.

But Mr Justice Cooke said: 'This handling was in the most serious category, this was a professional handling conspiracy. Whilst these sentences were harsh, they were in our judgement justified.'

The judge, sitting with Lord Justice Treacy and Mr Justice Edis, dismissed the appeals.

Crackdown on 'hoverboards'

TRADING Standards officers stopped the sale of nearly 1,800 unsafe 'hoverboards' in Birmingham in the run-up to Christmas, according to a report.

Birmingham City Council's trading standards team worked with port authorities across the country to suspend the sale of the popular gadgets.

Most of the items had come from China.

Officers contacted firms importing the boards in December to establish if the products met safety legislation.

And as a result they found 1,766 boards didn't which were then suspended from nine importers. This followed a number of reported incidents across the country where the battery-powered, self-balancing scooters caught fire, raising concerns over their safety.

Romance author to meet his fans

AUTHOR Michael Taylor give a talk at Coseley Library in Castle Street on Thursday, February 25, from 10.30am. Dudley-born Mr Taylor has written historical romances set locally, including Eve's Daughter. Places are free but must be booked on (01384) 812775.

£800k revamp almost finished for hospital

AN £800,000 revamp of Rowley Regis Hospital to create new clinics and a bigger car park is nearing completion.

The overall works are due to finish in the second week of March and hospital bosses say the facilities will deliver many benefits for patients and staff.

Work started last summer at the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust-run site to deliver more local services to residents – part of the trust's longer term plan for Sandwell.

It came at a time when there were fears amongst some patients the hospital could close. But bosses hope the refurbishment will quell those worries and show the facility has a bright future.

Toby Lewis, chief executive of the trust, said: 'Rowley Regis is a big part of our long-term 2020 Vision for the NHS in Sandwell.'

'Through the newly expanded facilities, we want to deliver more outpatient care on the site, as well as expanding our rehabilitation services for people needing longer term care closer to home, either discharged from Sandwell General or Russells Hall.'

Major

It is the first major investment at the hospital for 21 years and the hospital has been able to function as normal while it has been refurbished.

The majority of the plans were drawn up with the help of and input from patients and staff.

A new gym has been built and a colourful outpatient ward features eye-catching photographic prints of nature scenes.

Other existing services that have been expanded include phlebotomy, physiotherapy and paediatric.

A car park with 35 spaces has been added, freeing up other spaces at the site for patients.

A new primary care and treatment



Project manager Paul Scott takes a look at the new physiotherapy department at Rowley Regis Hospital

centre, which helps accident and emergency services, has been built.

The planning process has been the vision of NHS trust project manager Paul Scott, who has overseen most of it. He has spoken to different parties in the development, including patients and staff, about what they felt needed changing.

He said: 'Every member of the community that we possibly could reach had the chance to say what they wanted. We had a good and fair, robust response. One of the things that came out quite clearly was that Rowley Regis hospital as a community hospital is loved and cherished by the community.'

The hospital run outpatient services, so if you had a heart problem and you saw a consultant, they would see you as an outpatient. We have very few places that can do this, but the hospital is the place for Rowley's community outpatient services.

'It is about a great environment that has been upgraded, such as increasing the number of rooms and having the opportunity to open up community outpatient services.'

Clinical team leader Helen Bestant described the revamp as exciting. She said: 'The really exciting aspect I think of the refurbishment is that this is going to be around community therapy.'

'The hospital run outpatient services, so if you had a heart problem and you saw a consultant, they would see you as an outpatient. We have very few places that can do this, but the hospital is the place for Rowley's community outpatient services.'

'It is about a great environment that has been upgraded, such as increasing the number of rooms and having the opportunity to open up community outpatient services.'

'That will allow people to come to us. We will be able to see more patients. The hospital infrastructure, like car parking, will help too. That will allow us to cope with a higher volume of people coming through Rowley.'

Hospital patient Colin Green, aged 73, from Halesowen, praised the changes that have taken place.

He said: 'There is a lot more room. It is nice and light inside and the murals on the wall are very good.'

The hospital has also seen a second reception desk added and a bus stop placed right outside the building.

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Superfast internet is rolled out to 10,000

MORE than 10,000 businesses and households are now able to access high-speed fibre broadband thanks to the Black Country Broadband Project.

Parts of Dudley, Walsall, Wednesbury, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton are among the latest areas to benefit from the project, which is being led by Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership and BT.

The areas to benefit are Bentley, Blackheath, Brierley Hill, Castle ward, Darlaston, Ettingshall, Netherton, Priory, Rowley, St Andrews, St James', St Paul's, St Thomas's, the centre of West Bromwich and Woodside.

As part of the roll-out, engineers have already installed more than 80 fibre broadband road-side cabinets, which are needed to connect to the new network.

Work has also started on the second phase of the roll-out, which is extending the reach of the technology to additional parts of Brierley Hill, Dudley, James Bridge, Streetly, Tipton and Willenhall.

Ninder Johal, chair of the Black Country Broadband Group and a board member of the local enterprise partnership, said: "A superfast internet connection can make the world of difference to businesses and homes, so reaching the 10,000 milestone is a huge step in delivering our ambition of a minimum 98 per cent high-speed fibre broadband availability across the Black Country by the end of June 2017."

£1,000 through online donations

THE Mayor of Dudley has received £1,000 in online donations for his charities in just six months.

Councillor Steve Waltho opened the facility on BT My Donate, allowing people to donate via mobile phone or computer. The mayor is raising money for five charities this year – The Hope Centre, Halesowen; The What Centre, Stourbridge; More Mascots Please, Brierley Hill; The Leukaemia Unit Appeal Fund; Russells Hall Hospital; and the West Midlands branch of Lupus UK, based in Coseley.

Councillor Waltho said: "I am so pleased that people are choosing to help me raise funds for these deserving charities." People can donate online at mydonate.bt.com/charities/mayorofdudleycharities

Princess Royal to visit canal Portal

HRH The Princess Royal will be officially opening Dudley Canal and Tunnel Trust's new visitor centre next month. On March 14 Princess Anne will also take a tour of The Portal education centre.



Elaine Gordon was filmed pulling pints

A FORMER pub landlady who swindled the public out of £26,000 – claiming she couldn't wash and dress herself before being caught pulling pints – has been handed a suspended prison sentence.

Elaine Gordon was also seen loading her car with heavy stock while claiming state disability benefits.

The 59-year-old was filmed by the Department of Work and Pensions at the Prince of Wales pub in Tipton Road, Dudley, at the Riddins Tavern and at Makro wholesalers in Halesowen. At Wolverhampton Crown

Court last week she was sentenced to eight months in prison, suspended for two years, and given a 12-month supervision order.

Dishonestly

She started dishonestly claiming in December 2009 when running The Boat Inn in Cradley Heath, and carried it on until 2014, when she was filmed pouring 50 pints in an hour during a televised World Cup match.

She claimed that she had Raynaud's Disease, arthritis and varicose veins, and needed care seven days a week to

help with washing herself, cooking, dressing and going to the toilet.

Prosecutor Richard Davenport said: "She stated she was unable to work and virtually unable to walk. On September 17, 2014, she was interviewed, and accepted she wasn't entitled to what she was being paid."

Gordon, of Madehurst Road, Birmingham, had previously admitted failing to notify the authorities of a change in circumstances.

Defence barrister John Evans said: "Her medication played a big part in her improvement."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Library shake-up backed by cabinet

A SHAKE-UP of library services across Dudley which will see them run independently of the council has been backed by senior councillors.

The council cabinet backed a plan to establish a Libraries, Archives and Learning Mutual, a not-for-profit organisation which would involve services run by council employees and volunteers.

A final decision will be made by the full council in April. The cost-cutting move could see opening hours reduced and many libraries going down to a single staff member.

MP raises social care in Commons

HALESOWEN and Rowley Regis MP James Morris says adult social care is 'one of the biggest challenges' facing the UK over the coming years. Addressing Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Marcus Jones in the Commons, Mr Morris asked if the minister agreed more needs to be done to integrate health and social care to encourage local authorities to work with health providers to come up with innovative solutions?" Mr Jones said the Government was 'absolutely intent on spreading best practice'.

Tuffers to speak at charity dinner

TV presenter and ex-England cricketer Phil Tufnell will be speaking at a charity dinner in Brierley Hill.

The Mary Stevens Hospices Sportsman Dinner, is being held at the Copthorne Hotel on April 14. The event will also include a three course meal, comedian Gary Marshall and will be hosted by Radio WM's Paul Franks. All proceeds will go to hospice care. Tickets cost £55 per individual or £50 each for a table of eight or ten. Call (01902) 244220.

Students creating art for canal towpath

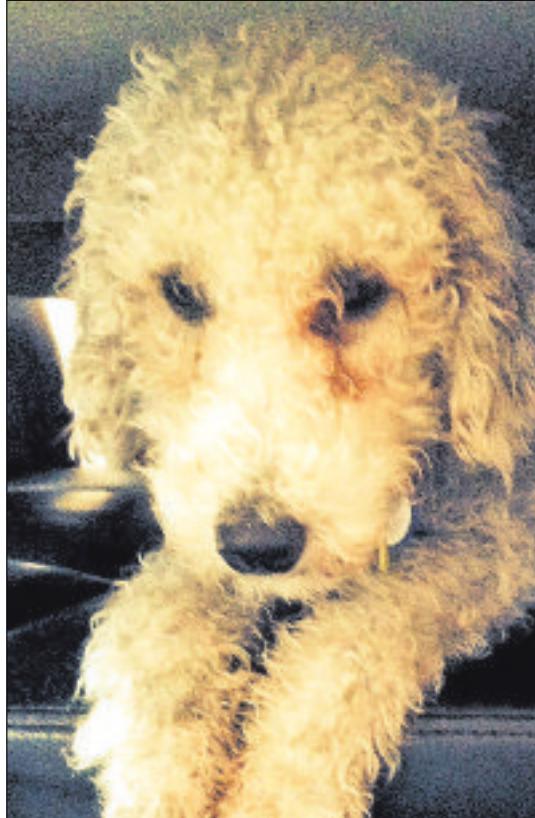
HALESOWEN College has launched a brand new partnership with Coombs Wood Canal Trust to help design a new piece of artwork for a towpath.

The project is in its early stages with students starting to research the history of the area. Then it is planned for art students to come up with designs to be placed along the canal towpath.

Elaine Cammies, community participation director at Halesowen College, said: "It is a great experience for our students."

Labour club for sale

CRADLEY Heath Labour Club, which closed last year after more than 90 years is for sale at an auction at Aston Villa Football Club on February 25. Its price has come down to between £125,000 and £150,000. There were no buyers when the Graingers Lane venue was offered in October.



Family pet Mila was viciously kicked by burglars which has left the friendly terrier with nerve damage and large vet bills for her owners

£7,000 raised to help dog recover

MORE than £7,000 has been donated towards vet bills for Halesowen owners of a dog badly beaten by burglars.

Mila, an 18-month-old Bedlington terrier, was repeatedly kicked in the head and left with nerve damage that means she cannot put her front feet on the ground.

Fundraising initiatives set up online have so far raised more than £7,000 to help Mila's owners, Julie Green and her 16-year-old daughter Maddie.

The burglars, who left empty handed, raided the Green family home on Al-brighton Road between 6pm and 7.30pm on Thursday.

Mrs Green said: "I'm just shocked and heartbroken that someone could do this to Mila. She is the friendliest dog."

Anyone with information is asked to contact police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Online fundraising by the family has raised £5,522 while an initiative by well-wisher Kieran Brophy has been supported to the tune of £1,555. Mrs Green said: "It means a lot to our family that there are so many caring people out there."



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THAT awkward moment on Crimewatch when a mugshot of a criminal bore a striking resemblance to presenter Jason Mohammed, takes me back to the 1970s when I was working Oop North. A handbag snatcher struck. His shocked victim, who barely saw the robber, said he looked a bit like a sports reporter on the local paper, whose byline photo appeared in every edition. The cops went to the newspaper office and took away the bewildered, and blameless, hack for questioning.

ACCORDING to some reports, holiday bookings to Turkey are down 40 per cent because British trippers are scared of terrorist attacks. Well, that's one explanation. Another is that we have seen the world's biggest and most brutal people-smuggling operation grow and thrive under the eyes of the Turkish authorities, threatening our borders and littering the Mediterranean beaches with drowned children. Does Turkey deserve our custom?



A 44-year-old stalker who pestered the One Show presenter Alex Jones turned up at court wearing a back-to-front baseball cap. He was served with a restraining order. Come to think of it, if every male over 40 who wears a baseball cap the wrong way around were held under house arrest, wouldn't the world be a happier place?

SPARE us the attempted posthumous conversion of Terry Wogan. He was a declared lifelong atheist. Yet some want to turn the Godless Wogan into something else. Their argument goes: Terry was a good man, therefore he was close to God. The idea that an atheist might be a good person doesn't even enter their thinking. Wogan saw the real, unfair world, including the nastier side of Catholicism, and drew his own conclusions: no God, no Heaven, no Hell, just the eternal goodness of humanity. Wogan was a good atheist and his views should be respected, not turned upside-down by the God-botherers.

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Tesco warehouse plan is hit by shaft worry

A PLAN by Tesco for a dedicated warehouse for online sales in the Black Country has hit a stumbling block because the intended site is over a mine entrance.

The DotCom centre could create more than 70 jobs and be used to deliver goods and groceries to shoppers' homes from the Burnt Tree Island supermarket.

Plans have been submitted to Dudley Council for three extensions to the supermarket, including one underneath the ground floor using some of the car park.

But the Coal Authority has lodged an official objection to the proposals because one of the extensions would be built over an entry to a mine.

It believes the supermarket giant has not provided sufficient information on how the risks would be mitigated. The shaft entry is one of 14 in or near the site.

Risks

In a letter to planners, Coal Authority planning liaison manager James Smith said: "We raised concerns that the extension to the western side of the building would be located over (a) recorded mine entry."

"We highlighted that building over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry raises significant safety and engineering risks and exposes all parties to potential financial liabilities.

"The Coal Authority has

adopted a policy where, as a general precautionary principle, the building over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry should wherever possible be avoided. Our adopted policy clearly states that building over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry will only be permissible when a suitable engineering design is developed and agreed to take account of all the relevant safety and environmental risk factors including gas and mine-water."

Castle and Priory ward's Councillor Ken Finch said: "There used to be a press company on the site during war time called Hewitts. There may have been open cast mines there too but that would be going back to the 1930s."

A spokesman for Tesco said the application was still going through the planning process. Up to 13 full and part-time jobs would be created, followed by 61 more.

Potential lifesaver at gym



Gymphobics member Beryl Chambers with the defibrillator

HALESOWEN town centre gym Gymphobics has raised £795 for a defibrillator.

A high energy electric shock, given to the heart in some types of cardiac arrest, may restore a more stable rhythm. This is called defibrillation, and it's an essential lifesaving step.

The briefcase-sized box contains a machine that can be used in in a bid to save someone in cardiac arrest.

The machine gives clear instructions and people don't need to be trained in its use.

Once in position the defibrillator will detect the person's heart rhythm and only deliver a shock if needed.

Available

The defibrillator will be stationed at the gym in High Street. Gymphobics owner Andrea Withers said: "Although our members raised the money for the defibrillator, it is available to anyone in Halesowen town centre, but fingers crossed it will never need to be used."

The kind-hearted members of Gymphobics have also helped by raising £2,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support via a clothes sale, raffles and cake sales at the ladies' gym.

More than 90 drivers speeding in an hour

ALMOST 100 motorists were caught speeding in just one hour as part of a campaign launched by residents in Brierley Hill.

Caledonia Residents Association launched their own speed campaign in a bid to crackdown on speeding and also encourage motorists to slow down.

Using a radar speed gun, members of the group recorded the speed of 110 passing vehicles on Caledonia. A total of 91 out of 110 vehicles were travelling over 30mph, with 78 of those driving between 30 to 40mph, 12 between 40 to 50mph and one over 50mph, when the test was conducted between 10am and 11am on Saturday, January 30.

Just 19 vehicles were driving within the speed limit of 30mph. The average speed of all vehicles recorded was 35.23mph, with one vehicle travelling at 52mph.

Details of all vehicles recorded as having exceeded the 30mph speed limit have been passed to the police, with a request that those exceeding 40mph are sent a warning letter.

Chairman of the Caledonia Residents Association, David Adams said: "What sparked us into taking action was a near tragic accident which happened on the road last year. Further speed awareness campaigns are planned with details of motorists exceeding the speed limit also being passed to the police."

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Burglar is jailed after raid on flat

A BURGLAR involved in a smash-and-grab raid on a flat in Cradley Heath is starting a 10-month jail sentence.

Stuart Archer and two other younger men were allowed into Adenbrooke Court in South Bank Road, Cradley Heath, by another tenant on April 3 last year.

They headed for a flat the occupant had just left locked and secured while she went out, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The front door to the premises was kicked off its hinges before they escaped with a TV, which was carried to a waiting Vauxhall Vectra in which they drove to the Lion Farm Estate in Oldbury. Here, the TV was handed over to others, said Mr John Brotherton, prosecuting.

Archer, 36, had previous convictions for burglary but was not a 'prolific' burglar, said Mr Peter Arnold, defending.

The defendant, from Peartree Lane, Cradley Heath, pleaded guilty to burglary. He was sent to prison by Judge Peter Barrie, who told him: "The fact that you were considerably older than the other two people involved is a seriously aggravating feature, but you are not a habitual criminal."

The two other men who took part in the burglary were dealt with separately at another court hearing.

Man is charged over a hoax bomb threat

A 20-year-old man has been charged after a hoax bomb threat made to Sandwell College.

Scott McLaughlin, from Cavendish Road, Edgbaston, has been charged after threats to the college on social media. The case is not being linked to recent telephone hoax calls to schools in the Black Country and Birmingham. McLaughlin was bailed to appear at Sandwell Magistrates Court on February 26.

Redundancy payments from councils reaches £50m total

Happy Jack celebrates 108th birthday



Jack Jones, 108, who is believed to be the oldest person in the Midlands, celebrates his birthday at a care home in Stourbridge

HE'S lived during two world wars, 20 prime ministers and the reign of four kings and a queen – and now Baggies superfan Jack Jones has celebrated turning 108.

Jack, who is believed to be the oldest person in the Midlands, says he 'takes every day as it comes' and being sociable is the secret to old age.

He celebrated Friday's momentous occasion with a modest party with tea and cake, surrounded by family.

Jack was born on February 12, 1908, when King Edward VII was on

the throne. Life-long West Bromwich Albion fan Jack, who lives at Tudor Manor care home in Stourbridge, said: "The secret to old age is being sociable – meeting new people and always helping people. I just take every day as it comes."

"The people here in the care home are so nice to me and look after me – it's like being part of a big family. I've been very fortunate in my life. I don't want anything special for my birthday, I don't really need anything."

In the Second World War Jack

helped build Spitfires and spent much of his working life as a lorry driver, as well as working in the metal industry.

Jack married Winifred in 1939 but she passed away in 1989. The couple did not have children but Jack was joined by nieces and nephews to celebrate his birthday.

He added: "One of my fondest memories is getting married and going to the new bungalow I had built."

Home manager Nisha Pritchard said: "He is a very kind, caring man, and a joy to have around."

COUNCILS across the Black Country and Staffordshire have spent almost £50 million on redundancy payments to staff in the last five years.

A Freedom of Information (FOI) request shows that Dudley Council has paid out more than £21m, Wolverhampton City Council spent more than £13m, while Walsall Council coughed up £5,947,094.

Across the Black Country's four authorities 5,391 staff were either made redundant or took voluntary redundancy in that time.

The huge payouts have come during a time when the region's authorities are making massive budget cuts to meet sweeping reductions to central government grants.

Sandwell Council failed to respond to the FOI request – despite being given 60 working days to do so.

Staffordshire County Council has shelled out almost £30m in redundancy payments since 2010/11.

Savings

Dudley Council paid out £21,334,000 to 1,447 departing staff members. The figure includes almost £8.5 million in redundancy payouts in 2010/11, when 529 people were either laid off or took voluntary redundancy.

Wolverhampton Council paid 1,546 workers a total of £13,680,707. Payouts included £6,742,427 in 2013/14 when 777 employees were either laid off or took voluntary redundancy.

Finance chief Councillor Andrew Johnson said: "We have tried as far as possible to make the council run efficiently."

"Our biggest cost is staffing, and those who have remained have effectively had a pay cut when you take inflation into account."

Walsall Council paid £5,947,094 to 624 staff who left the authority. One departing staff member was paid £83,665 in 2011/12.

Bureau chief who went that extra smile

A DEDICATED community worker has left his role as chief executive at Sandwell Citizens Advice Bureau after 27 years of service.

John Davies, aged 64, from Amblecote, first started as a volunteer with the Dudley branch in 1986. He then moved to Sandwell the following year, covering the Smethwick and Cradley Heath area.

Mr Davies was made general services manager in 2004 and appointed chief executive in 2006.

He said: "I have met some life-long friends who are fantastic dedicated professionals. I have thoroughly enjoyed being able to help people. I always said that if they came into my office with worries then I wouldn't be happy until they left with a smile."

Mr Davies' last day at the office in West Bromwich was on February 5, where colleagues arranged a surprise party. He added: "I look forward to chilling out for a while now before getting involved in some local charity and community projects."

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Silence is golden as day centre is suffering

NOBODY who has followed the fortunes of Wolverhampton Council for the past few years can be unaware of the massive cuts to services the authority has been imposing.

Looking at the bigger picture, £146 million worth of savings over the next three years seems hard to comprehend. But it is the smaller stuff which really makes a difference. Take, for example, the Columbia Day Centre which cares for people suffering from dementia. It used to be funded by the council, but now faces possible closure unless £150,000 can be raised.

It is in this context that we learn Wolverhampton Council has spent nearly £8m of public money over the last five years buying the silence of departing staff.

Yes, that's right. Since 2011/2, the cash-strapped council has spent almost £8m on ensuring people do not talk publicly about their work or the reasons why they have left.

In the past eight months alone, while the authority has been busy warning us about draconian cuts it has spent £1.8m on clauses to keep people quiet.

What beans they thought their former staff were going to spill, we will probably never know. But one can only assume that some of it was not going to be entirely true.

Perhaps £8m does not seem a great amount of money to an organisation handling hundreds of millions of pounds, but it would keep the Columbia Day Centre, and dozens of other small local services, running for a good few years. Silence is golden, so the saying goes. And very expensive, by the sound of things.

□□□

NEARLY 50,000 people have signed a petition calling for the north of England, from Liverpool, Sheffield and Hull upwards, to join with Scotland in a new independent state.

Actually, I use the term petition loosely.

It is another one of these Change.org online campaigns, where busybodies activists spend their days furiously tapping away at their computer screens believing they can change the world through a website.

Still it raises an interesting question about how relevant the values of Westminster are to the rest of the UK, although I fear they have missed the point slightly.

There is not so much a north-south divide in modern Britain, but a chasm between London and the rest of Britain. The answer is surely not for the north of England to join with Scotland, but for London to be declared an independent principality like Monaco.

Let them worry about tofu, diversity and cycle lanes, and the rest of us will create a new capital city for the rest of Britain. Somewhere central. In the Black Country maybe?



A Kodak Brownie camera with parts from camera flash



Another one of Paul's many unique clocks



Paul Parry from Coven who makes unique clocks

Clocking on for some stunning timepieces

Paul Parry's spare time hobby is going places and has caught the attention of a Dragon Den's star, as JOE EDWARDS reports

TAKE a little time to take in these stunning timepieces.

They take months to produce and sell for thousands of pounds and are just some of the hundreds of stunning clocks made by Paul Parry in his spare time.

Mr Parry uses both upcycled electronics and new materials to make the clocks on evenings and weekends, from the spare bedroom of his home in Coven, near Wolverhampton.

The 43-year-old set up Bad Dog Designs with partner Karen in April 2014, and the business has taken flight with customers around the world looking to get their hands on a truly individual, unique design.

Rewards

Dragons' Den star Theo Paphitis recently spotted Bad Dog Designs through his weekly Small Business Sunday initiative on Twitter, where he rewards entrepreneurs who send him a quick description of their business.

Paul recently showcased some of his designs at Liberty's department store in London and is due to meet Mr Paphitis at a Small Business Sunday convention at The ICC, Birmingham tomorrow.

With prices starting at around £300, Paul, who works in management for a systems maintenance infrastructure company, has been commissioned to produce a robot clock, using brass and stainless steel, for a hotel in Singapore which he will sell for £7,000, his biggest sale to date.

"The robot clock is on commission for £7,000 and is going to a boutique hotel in Singapore which is being built as we speak," said Paul.

"It will stand in the foyer and will be the first thing people see when they walk in."

Paul says he has now made around 200 different clocks during his spare time, all of which are signed by himself.

These include the Watson, which was origi-



Design taken from Turing's Bombe used to decode Enigma Machine messages

nally a 1938 watt meter, the Captain Nemo MK II, made from an old music box casing from the 1850s, and the Marconi MK II, styled to look like an old valve radio or amplifier.

"I only do evenings and weekends, some commissions can take around four to five months to complete. The robot clock will take 18-months," he added.

"The quickest I've ever done one is in two or three evenings but that was a small, simple clock. "The cost is a reflection of the time and effort that goes into every clock.

"Every one is different, everybody wants something unique to them. Hopefully somebody will come along some day and commission me to do a clock that is worth £20,000. When people see the clocks, they will ask 'what is that?' Then the second question will be 'where can I get one from?'

Nixie tubes, which are used to display the time on Paul's steampunk clocks, were hugely popular in the 1950s and 60s and used in gadgets of the time, from petrol pumps to military equipment.

The last were made in Ukraine and Russia in the early 1990s, but Paul scours the internet for old tubes, which have a distinctive orange glow and each digit stacked behind the other within the tube. Small ones cost around £6 each, medium-sized ones approximately £30 and large ones can be bought for as much as £200.

"They are not economically viable for companies to produce, it's very much an old technology. Its a niche market," said Paul.

Every clock is handmade with recycled equipment and original vintage items, but modern microprocessor technology is used to power the old tubes. Most are named after famous scientists and electrical engineers, such as Michael Faraday, Nikola Tesla and Guglielmo Marconi.

People from all over the globe have bought a clock made by Paul, who remarkably doesn't own one himself.

"They're named after 17th and 18th century scientists – Faraday, Tesla, Gordon – mainly so I know which one is which," he added.

Celebrating

"I've done clocks celebrating birthdays, weddings, anniversaries and even as Christmass gifts. The enquires I get are from all over the place.

"When people see the clocks, they really do sell themselves. Around 30 to 40 per cent of my customers are repeat customers, which has surprised me.

"One guy from the United States has bought five off me. I've had people from the States and Singapore come over here to pick up their clocks.

"Sometimes when they are going out to China and Singapore, I'll use a shipping company but a lot do come over to pick them up and see how it all works.

"The business funds itself, a sale of a clock funds the parts for the next one.

"I love building the clocks, I find it relaxing. I have to sell them though, otherwise I'd just have a house full of them. I don't actually own one, but one of these days I will actually own a clock that I have made myself."

To see the full range of remarkable clocks which Paul has produced, visit www.bad-dog-designs.co.uk

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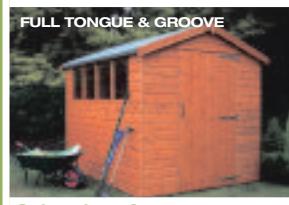
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Our libraries are a source of inspiration

OVER recent years we have all seen a considerable cut on funding for public services. One that really concerns me the most is our libraries.

A large number of libraries have already been closed by the Government's spending cuts. I feel closure of libraries has a huge impact on society.

It is easy to understand the decline of people visiting libraries due to the increase in internet usage on mobile phones and tablets, and not realising the importance of having a library within the community, especially for the young and elderly.

These days school children will type

in their question on Google and will be supplied a list of various links with the answer. Ok, I agree it saves time, but this also limits the child in using their own intelligence to investigate and takes the fun out of research.

Many of today's children have never set foot in a library. This is restricting their knowledge on how and where to look for research, many having no idea how to look for items alphabetically or how to use an index.

The library is also just as important for the elderly. A place to engage within the community. For some, a

sanctuary within warm surroundings. To lose a library would have a huge impact on all generations. Not only that but if libraries are run by volunteers (one of the proposals in cutting costs) there is the risk of losing professional expertise and the data protection that librarians have to adhere to.

As a child I attended the library every weekend. Seeing shelves full of books was to me Aladdin's Cave! Books have inspired me so much.

Let the children be inspired by the magic in books – there is much more than just tapping into the internet!

FATIMA (FULL NAME SUPPLIED)

Brierley Hill

Call for dog free areas in all parks

ALL parks should have dog free areas.

So well done to Dudley Council in having the forethought to make a dog free zone at Himley Hall Park.

This should apply to all parks in the borough.

A park is for the use of everyone and not just the dog walkers, who should have a segregated dog zone of their own.

This would keep the rest of the parks free from rampaging dogs defecating and urinating all over the place.

My local park is Wollescote Park, which is a lovely park containing many flower beds, children's play area, tennis courts and bowling greens.

It annoys me when these facilities are invaded by roaming dogs whose owners cannot be bothered to control them and/or pick up their animal's waste.

Let's have more dog free area in all our parks.

A THOMAS

Stourbridge

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and **MUST** include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Can I negotiate my tax rate now please?

GEORGE Osborne announced that he had managed to get a concession from Google to pay their corporation tax at a rate of two and a half per cent. As a tax-payer and a pensioner I would like to negotiate the same terms please.

Ordinary people like us have to pay what the tax man demands. Why the difference? It is because Google and many like them stash their money away in tax havens, so that the Inland Revenue can't get access to it. Apparently, this is called tax avoidance which is somehow different from tax evasion, even though it is tantamount to the same thing.

One can only assume it is legal because it is another avenue allowing the ruling classes to get richer whilst the poor get poorer.

Osborne claims that the Google deal is the best he can do. If I had stashed billions in taxes in my cousin's house in Australia, I'll bet HMRC would soon seize all my assets. This is what we should do with those greedy multi-national companies. HMRC should seize their tangible UK assets up to the value of their tax debts. You can bet they would pay their taxes then. We should pass a law that paying the correct tax is a pre-condition of allowing them to trade in the UK.

M CLIFF

Dudley

Disgust at domination of football

I WONDER how many readers recall the names of Sean Kerly – who was a member of the British hockey team that won gold at the Seoul Olympics in 1988 – and of Jane Sixsmith, a member of the ladies' team which brought back bronze from Barcelona in 1992?

At the time, these young people were quite rightly lauded for the honour they brought to Britain. People have short memories.

I am not particularly a hockey fan. I have seldom watched a game but I must express my disgust at the shameful decision of Dudley Council to turn out two long established hockey clubs from the Dell Stadium in order to lay a £500,000 synthetic pitch which it hopes will encourage budding footballers. What about encouraging young hockey players?

Yet again we have the interests of a minority sport being cynically sacrificed on the altar of the great god Football. Disgraceful.

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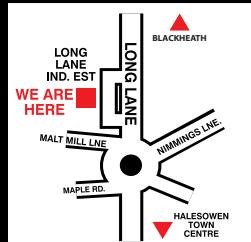


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Jumping for joy at Billy Elliot role



Twelve-year-old Lewis Smallman, left, from West Bromwich, is one of the young actors to play Billy Elliot. A YOUNGSTER from the Black Country has landed a starring role in the first ever UK tour of the hit musical Billy Elliot.

Lewis Smallman, aged 12, has been hand-picked to play the lead character following nationwide auditions. He will line up alongside three other boys who will alternate between the role when the show tours the UK and Ireland.

The musical will touch down at Birmingham Hippodrome on March 7, 2017, and run until May 6.

Theatre spokeswoman Mandy Rose said: "It's great to see local talent being recognised."

Lewis will soon be hard at work when rehearsals begin. Tickets are to go on general sale on April 8. Visit www.birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.

Not a penny! Black Country misses out on £300m boost

LOCAL government will receive £300 million to ease funding cuts to central government grants – but cash-strapped local authorities in the Black Country won't get a penny.

Communities secretary Greg Clark has announced a £150m support scheme for councils in each of the next two years in response to concerns over changes to funding calculations.

None of the four local authorities in the Black Country will receive any of the transitional money – sparking fury among council bosses.

Meanwhile, Tory-run Staffordshire County Council will receive additional funding of £5.56m over two years.

The announcement came after the conclusion of the consultation on the provisional Local Government Financial Settlement.

Critics say the new relief fund will overwhelmingly help Conservative areas, including the Prime Minister's own Oxfordshire council which is set to get £9m over two years.

Dudley Council leader Councillor Pete Lowe said the authority would remain saddled with the largest cuts to funding in its history.

Outrageous

"This is another example of decision-making by a government to benefit its own party," he said.

"All we ask for is a fair deal, but we're not getting that."

Wolverhampton council's finance chief, Councillor Andrew Johnson, said the settlement 're-emphasised the unfairness' of how the grant was calculated.

"It is outrageous," he said. "Richer areas in the South East, mainly Tory councils I might add, have had less cuts yet some of them are getting extra money. It just adds insult to injury."

Worst for gun crime

THE West Midlands has been named the UK's gun crime capital for the second year in a row.

New figures show there were 562 offences between April 2014 and April last year – an increase on the 540 gun related crimes for the previous 12 months.

The data released by the Office for National Statistics means the region now has a gun crime rate of 20 per 100,000 people, which is higher than the 19 per 100,000 for the Metropolitan Police in London, Greater Manchester at 16 and Merseyside at 12.

Deputy Chief Constable Dave Thompson has said gun crime is back in a way 'not seen for five years', blaming increased availability of ammunition.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson said: "A priority for me in 2016 is working with the force to tackle gun and knife crime. The number of offences are much lower than they were a decade ago, but we cannot let up in our pursuit of people who carry and trade illegal weapons."

"I am committed to recruiting more police officers and deliver on the promise of recruiting 450 more officers. They will help in the fight against gun crime."

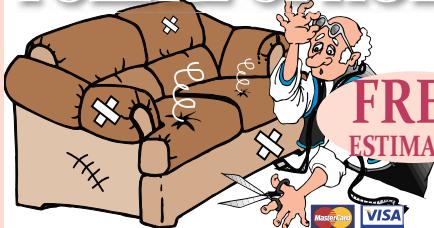
Last week there were two shootings in the space of two hours in Hawksworth and Handsworth.

Earlier this month company boss Akhtar Javed was shot dead at his warehouse in Digbeth. Four arrests have made in connection with his death.

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Footballer's daughter nets 60th anniversary

A FORMER West Bromwich Albion striker's daughter found her match of the day 60 years ago – and their love is still going strong.

Shirley and John Flood have marked their diamond wedding anniversary and it was thanks to Shirley's football-playing father that the two met and settled in West Bromwich.

Joe Johnson played for the Baggies in the lead up to the Second World War. He only spent two years playing for Albion, between 1937 and 1939, though he had an impressive scoring record netting 22 goals in 55 appearances. He was probably as well-known in the town for the cafe he ran in Dartmouth Park after the war.

Joe, who died in 1983, ran the cafe for three decades. In 2012, a snack bar was opened in his honour on the site it once stood.

He turned out more times for Stoke City, and scored four goals in a game against the Baggies when they were trounced 10-3 in 1937, but West Bromwich became home for Shirley. She helped out at the cafe from the age of 10 and was a familiar face there in the years to come.

Her family also managed catering at the town's Grand Hall and it was there in 1953 that she met John, who was attending a dance organised by St Michael's Church – the place where the two would be married two years later.

Six decades of happy marriage followed and the couple have four children, seven grandchildren, two step-grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Shirley, aged 80, says they have stayed together for so long because they are still in love. She said: "He was tall, handsome and good looking and that's what I was looking for."



The couple are celebrating 60 years



Shirley's father, ex-Baggie Joe Johnson

Industrial death verdict

A FORMER HGV driver who had worked at Land Rover died as a result of asbestos in his lungs, an inquest heard.

Derek Humphreys, aged 66, of New Henry Street, Langley, was found in his home by police after his son Dean had not heard from him for a couple of days.

He was pronounced dead at the scene on November 14 last year.

Coroner's officer Joanne Stokes said Mr Humphreys had a history of

chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, meaning he often had difficulty breathing.

A report submitted by pathologist Dr Suhail Muzaffar revealed that Mr Humphreys had asbestos in his lungs at the time of death.

The cause of death was confirmed as acute respiratory failure.

Senior coroner for the Black County, Zafar Siddique concluded Mr Humphreys died from an industrial related death.

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storm



£1m timeshare gang targeted pensioners



Emma Jelf, aged 44, of Stourbridge



Todd Mann, aged 27, of Stourbridge



Toby Mann, aged 23, of Stourbridge

MEMBERS of a fraud gang whose £1 million timeshare swindle left elderly victims facing financial disaster have been jailed for a combined 48 years.

Many of the 38 pensioners targeted by the ruthless fraudsters from the West Midlands had their life savings siphoned away after swindlers offered to help them sell their Spanish timeshares.

Seven members of the gang were jailed at Birmingham Crown Court for conspiracy to defraud, while three were given suspended sentences and community service.

In total, 38 people were duped out of £1m between February 2011 and April 2013. Conspirators would phone up victims and tell them their timeshares could be sold but a fee had to be paid, the court had been told.

Victims were told they had to pay tax and legal fees while at the same time being promised an increased payout.

Judge Roderick Henderson told Birmingham Crown Court: "One victim lost £172,000, her life savings. Another, who was 78, was hoping to pay off her mortgage, but now she'll have to continue to work." He told the fraudsters: "You will have known that your victims were elderly and vulnerable."

Launder

The swindle involved setting up of two companies. More people were recruited so their bank accounts could be used to launder cash.

The biggest loser lost £250,000, while another paid out £165,000.

Emma Jelf, 44, of Shenstone Avenue, Stourbridge, was sentenced to eight years prison after being found guilty of conspiracy to defraud and pleading guilty to money laundering.

On conspiracy to defraud charges: Luke Jiminez, 25, of Atlantic Road, Kingstanding, found guilty and sentenced to eight years in prison.

Amarjit Bagharian, 29, of St Albans Road, Smethwick. Seven years and two months jail. Pleaded guilty.

Shivjit Bagharian, St Albans Road, Smethwick. Seven years and two months. Pleaded guilty.

Todd Mann, 27, Shenstone avenue, Stourbridge. Five years and four months. Pleaded guilty.

Richard Buxton, 60, Hom View, Shenstone. Five years, seven months. Pleaded guilty.

Mandy Castellain, 46, from Oldham. Six years and seven months. Pleaded guilty.

On money laundering charges: Toby Mann, 23, from Shenstone Avenue, Stourbridge, received an eight-month prison sentence, suspended for 18 months, 150 hours community service and a 12-month supervision order. Pleaded guilty.

David Baylie, 28, of Chatterton Walk, Kidderminster, was given a 12-month jail sentence suspended for 18 months and 170 hours community service. Pleaded guilty.

Neil Poole, 26, of Sandy Lane, Wednesbury, received a prison sentence of one year and 20 weeks suspended for 24 months, and 200 hours community service. Pleaded guilty.

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Express & Star

Medal won by heroic soldier sells for £48k

A MEDAL won by an heroic soldier who fought against Zulu warriors in a bloody conflict and is buried in Bilston has been sold at a Stourbridge auction for nearly £50,000.

The medal of 1524 Private Joseph Bromwich 2-24th Foot, who fought in the Anglo-Zulu War, was sold to a Midlands private collector for £48,980.

It was inherited by a Black Country couple through their family, who had no idea of its value.

Around 150 British and colonial soldiers defended a mission station in the Battle of Roke's Drift in South Africa. The fight lasted for 12 hours and was against a Zulu force of thousands.

It proved the basis for the 1964 blockbuster movie Zulu, starring Michael Caine and Stanley Baker.

Brother

Private Bromwich, who is buried in Bilston, served in the battle, aged just 22, alongside his elder brother Charles.

The medal was originally estimated to be sold for around £20,000 at Fieldings Auctioneers but went for more than twice as much.

Private Bromwich was discharged from the Army in 1882, suffering from hepatitis, and settled with Bilston-born wife Betsy, in Aston, opening a boot and shoe repairing shop.

Eventually moving to the Black Country and continuing to work as a boot and shoe repairer.

His wife died in 1914 and the following year, he was diagnosed with cancer of the tongue. He died on the February 25 1916, aged just 60, and is buried in an unmarked grave in a Bilston Cemetery.



Auction director Nick Davies with the rare medal that came up for sale

Junior doctors on picket line

JUNIOR doctors were on a picket line outside Russells Hall Hospital last week during a second national one-day strike in the space of a month.

A group of around 20 junior doctors gathered with placards, banners and posters for the 24-hour walkout on February 10 as part of the ongoing dispute over new contracts.

The major sticking point in the dispute is over weekend pay and whether Saturday should be largely classed as a normal working day.

Registrar Hafiz Aladin, 32, joined his co-workers on the picket line. He said: "The change of contract is ludicrous and it's almost a fallacy to think the NHS can survive if this is implemented. We have been overwhelmed with public support we've received."

At the hospital, 182 outpatient appointments, four day-case procedures and two inpatient operations had to be rescheduled.

No-one from hospital management was available to comment.

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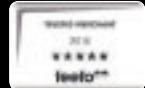
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Caliban from The Tempest, part of the paper figures in the installation



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Romeo and Juliet – life-size paper tribute marking 400 years since Shakespeare's death



The Bard himself is represented in the display, working at his desk



Antonio (The Merchant of Venice) gambles in the tavern

Paper trail for Bard

FROM King Richard III to King Lear and Caliban to Romeo – Shakespeare's most famous characters have been handcrafted from paper and cardboard for an exhibition.

The show displays scale models over 6ft tall, a 10ft high balcony and even a walk-in tavern.

It has been made as a tribute to mark 400 years since the Bard's death. Each piece on display at Birmingham City University was individually crafted by 22 first year students from the

design for theatre, performance and events degree course. They used techniques learned on the course to sculpt 780 metres of corrugated cardboard and nearly 5,000 metres of brown paper into the entire setting and characters.

Among the figures on show are a likeness of William Shakespeare himself, sat writing at his desk and full-size replicas of some of theatre's most famous names – including King Lear, Caliban, Richard III, Romeo and Juliet.

The exhibition took nearly three weeks to create, with students working day and night to make each setting, character and item from scratch, as well as selecting music and lighting

to complement each element. Hollie Wright, module leader for the project, said: "The project is a simple yet extremely effective approach to experiential learning."

"We want the first year students to engage with fundamental principles associated with performance design."

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust helped students with research, later visiting the installation to select a number of characters and settings which will be displayed in Stratford-upon-Avon when the project ends. Housed in the Shell space at the university's Parkside building, it is open to the public until February 26.



Viola, from Twelfth Night, portrayed as she changes on the balcony at the university

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Cone is where the art is for society's exhibition

A STUNNING selection of paintings is on show at an art exhibition in Wordsley.

The Brierley Hill Society of Artists' display at the Red House Glass Cone features more than 75 original pieces of artwork, plus many unframed prints using watercolours, mixed media and acrylic.

Visitors can see a wide variety of work, covering local scenes including the Cone itself, plus Himley Hall, Shropshire towns and places abroad.

Presenter

Other topics include animals, flowers, landscapes and even a cartoon of politician and TV presenter Michael Portillo during his visit to the Red House Glass Cone.

Pauline Carroll, the secretary of the society, said this year's exhibition was one of the best yet.

Thief put behind bars after £40k crime spree

A PROLIFIC thief who stole around £40,000 in a four-month crime spree in Dudley has been jailed.

Lorenzo Brown, aged 22, was described in court as a 'skilled thief' who had shown no remorse for his victims who were left out of pocket.

Among those he targeted were his neighbours whose mailboxes were raided for bank cards and other property.

Brown, of Ripley Grove, Dudley, pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to five counts of theft, four of fraud and one of handling stolen goods.

Jailing him up for three years and four months, Judge Nicholas Webb said: 'You are not only an opportunist thief but also a very skilful one. You show no remorse.'

Brown was first arrested after stealing a high-performance Audi A4 worth around £30,000 from the Village Hotel in Dudley in October 2014. Brown managed to open a combination-style padlock before stealing a wedding ring, watch and the car keys from a locker.

He was granted police bail with officers unaware he had also been plundering the bank accounts of his neighbours.

Gym

One neighbour lost around £3,500 after Brown intercepted bank cards and PIN numbers for new accounts she had opened. He activated the accounts using his own details and then used the card to pay bills, buy takeaway meals and order furniture.

Other items taken from neighbours included bank statements, an investment portfolio and another bank card which Brown used to apply for a gym membership. He also stole his cousin's wallet, again using a bank card to pay bills and take out car hire agreements in his cousin's name.



Prolific thief Lorenzo Brown

Brown was convicted by a jury on two counts of theft and one of fraud.

Judge Webb said: 'You had moved to a flat in Ripley Grove. There were honest, hardworking people there and unfortunately for them, you as well. Not letting an opportunity to steal go begging, you began to steal items of post from their letter boxes.'

Those offences were committed while on bail for the theft of the locker items and the car.

'Overall you stole property to a value approaching £40,000,' said the judge. 'You were involved in the stealing of a wedding ring, watch and car keys from a padlocked locker in a fitness centre. It was a very sophisticated and skilful theft requiring both speed and nerve.'

The court heard Brown had been studying for a degree until illness left him in hospital for five months. He was out of work, struggling financially and turned to crime.

Meet author at library

NOVELIST and short story writer Lisa Blower will be visiting Sedgley Library later this month. People are invited to bring a book they love or a book received from a loved one to the free event on Monday, February 29, at 2pm.

It is part of the month-long programme of Love your Libraries events in Dudley borough. The Stoke-on-Trent born author's debut novel Sitting Ducks is out next month.

Mrs Carroll said: 'It's going quite well, we've sold quite a few framed and unframed prints now. There have been a great number of people come to see us and everyone has made good comments about it.'

'I think it's a brilliant space to have an exhibition and this year has been really good. It seems to improve every year and the quality of the paintings this year is excellent.'

Mrs Carroll said exhibition included works by Gill Smith, John Moorinch and Steve Millward, among others.

Mr Millward sold the most expensive piece so far - for £210. All of the artists' work on display is for sale and prices start at £15.

For more information about the exhibition and other events at the historic venue, go to the website www.redhouseglasscone.co.uk



Gill Smith, Pauline Carroll and Ena Baker at the Brierley Hill District Society of Artists exhibition in Wordsley

Birmingham flights to Qatar from March

NEW flights from Birmingham Airport to Doha in Qatar will be launched at the end of March.

Qatar Airways will begin a service to and from its new Hamad International Airport on March 30.

It marks the fourth UK airport that Qatar operates from and it will initially be offering eight flights a week from Birmingham using a Boeing 787.

Senior vice president for Europe North and South West, Jon Harding, said that Qatar, which currently employs 150 on passenger services and 25 on its cargo team in the UK, was recruiting for a number of new posts based at the airport.

It will take the number of flights out of the UK each week to 73 with the other airports from which it operates being Heathrow, Manchester and Edinburgh.

Mr Harding said that the economic impact of starting flights between Edinburgh and Qatar had added £5 million to the Scottish economy.

'We expect to have a similar or even greater impact on the West Midlands economy,' he added. 'Birmingham is a market that we are keen to serve.'

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Safari park's huge new arrival dwarfs even T-Rex

A HUGE dinosaur has arrived at West Midland Safari Park – in time for half term.

Reaching a length of almost 50 feet, the new addition to the 'Land of the Living Dinosaurs' – a Spinosaurus – is one of the largest and longest dinosaurs in the exhibit.

Complete with long claws, a ferocious crocodile-like head and large pointy teeth, the new arrival even makes the park's life-sized Tyrannosaurus Rex look small.

Head dinosaur keeper Emily Brooks said: "Spinosaurus is one of the most recent carnivorous dinosaur discoveries and will make an incredible addition to the Land of the Living Dinosaurs. It was ginormous, bigger than T-Rex by a good margin.

"But it would rarely have been seen on land. Spinosaurus is one of the first dinosaurs palaeontologists

have come across that is perfectly adapted for an aquatic life. It had a great long tail, webbed toes on huge paddle-like feet and powerful arms."

Although both Spinosaurus and T-Rex lived during the Cretaceous period, they would never have had a battle over food or territory, as they lived on different continents and millions of years apart.

Like its companions, the Spinosaurus is animatronic, giving visitors the feeling of walking amongst prehistoric beasts. It is the newest addition to the UK's largest animatronic dinosaur attraction, bringing the number of life-sized, moving dinosaurs to 40.

The park's standard admission charge is £22 for adults, £17 for children (aged 3 to 15) and £20 for concessions. See the website at www.wmsp.co.uk or call 01299 402114.



No eating the visitors – Emily Brooks, head dinosaur keeper at the safari park, with the Spinosaurus

Mother, 70, wakes after 16 days in a coma

A PENSIONER who was struck down by a devastating brain disease which put her in a coma for 16 days has now regained consciousness.

Her family are delighted that she is awake but are aware that she has a long road to recovery ahead.

Jeanette Powell, aged 70, enjoyed an active lifestyle before she was hit with encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain, last October, a condition which almost claimed her life.

Doctors told her family to prepare for the worst, but against all odds, she awoke from her coma.

Rehabilitation for Mrs Powell, aged 70, from Wall Heath, Kingswinford, will be lengthy, and she faces a future of constant care.

Lisa Slater, her daughter, said: "My mum, a fit and healthy 70-year-old, felt unwell with flu-like symptoms. She began hallucinating and was admitted to hospital.

"Within 48 hours she was in critical care, in a coma, on a life support machine. As a family, we prepared for the worst.

"However, 16 days later, mom woke up and opened her eyes, to the amazement of the medical staff."

Uncertain

Lisa added: "We as a family have a long road ahead of us, our lives have changed for ever."

Survivors of encephalitis can face an uncertain future as it the condition can often rob them of their memories. Abilities such as concentration and judgement can also be affected.

Mrs Powell, who used to run Wall Heath Community Centre, has now been moved to West Park Rehabilitation Hospital, where she will remain there for many months.

Lisa said: "She has re-learned how to use her left side and can now eat. However, she is very confused, needs to learn to walk again



Jeanette Powell – nearly died

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS IN BUSINESS

Burton Motors was founded on the 17th February 1981 and this week celebrates 35 years in business

We are a small independent garage, M.O.T. testing station class 4 and carry out repairs and servicing on all makes of vehicles. We have a well equipped workshop with a variety of specialist tools and equipment. We offer a comprehensive service from engine diagnostics to clutch and head gasket replacements to name but a few.

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Burton Motors is a lady driver friendly garage. Julie Burt (owner) fully understands how daunting it can be in what is predominantly a male environment. With this in mind she welcome's all customers as she would expect to be treated herself.

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Engine Diagnostic

Is your engine light on? There are many reasons why

Commissioner not keen on school idea

HOME Secretary Theresa May's suggestion that Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) should set up schools for troubled children has been questioned by the West Midlands commissioner, himself a former headteacher.

David Jamieson said he wasn't sure the move was 'best for children' after Mrs May said PCCs should bring together police reform and school reform and help steer children away from a life of crime.

She unveiled proposals for more powers for PCCs, branching into youth justice, probation and court services after the elections in May.

But Mr Jamieson hinted he would be uncomfortable with the changes. He said: "Before becoming an MP and a PCC, I was a teacher and headteacher for more than 25 years. I must confess, this idea of reuniting with my former profession has come out of the blue – I thought my school days were over.

"I am uncertain that PCCs running schools fits entirely within our brief or, more importantly, is the best thing for children. Schools should be run by teachers and education experts."



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THE culling of geese in Sandwell will stop after a campaign that saw a 4,000-name petition handed to the council.

A total of 220 Canada geese have been culled over the past two years in Tipton's Victoria Park and Dartmouth Park, West Bromwich.

At a scrutiny meeting, it was announced new measures will be undertaken by Sandwell Council to monitor geese numbers and culling will be stopped, although it could happen again in the future.

Campaigner Ian Carroll, said: "I'm obviously pleased it's been stopped but we've been given no assurances it will not happen again. They've already previously admitted to killing 220 birds before the public consultation in September and October last year even started. The fight is not over."

New measures will include re-locating pathways, bird scarers and the continued pricking of eggs.

The council had said geese numbers had 'got out of control', with more than 1,000 of them grazing in Sandwell parks. Councillor Maria Crompton said: "Nobody loves animals more than me but people need to be considered in this issue as well as the geese. We've had many complaints of excrement being a huge problem, as well geese acting very aggressively."

Massed Welsh voices to celebrate 50 years

BIRMINGHAM Canoldir Male Choir is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a concert of nearly 400 massed Welsh voices.

The choir will be joined by members of Bridgend, Cardiff Arms Park, Pontarddulais and Duvant male voice choirs, as well as Four Oaks Cluster Choir for the concert in Birmingham Town Hall on May 7 at 6pm.

Tickets are on sale from the box office on 0121 780 3333 at £20 to £30.

More than 1,000 shoe shop jobs saved as buyer steps in

City's trams to be battery-operated



An artist's impression of how the new battery-operated electric trams will look running in the centre of Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM is to be the first UK city to use cutting edge battery technology to operate its trams, removing overhead power lines.

A fleet of Midland Metro Urbos 3 trams will be fitted with hi-tech batteries to power the vehicles through architecturally sensitive areas.

It means there will be no need for overhead cables around the 182-year-old Town Hall in Victoria Square when the city centre Metro line is extended through from New Street station to Centenary Square.

Councillor John McNicholas, chairman of the Integrated Transport Authority's (ITA's) delivery committee, said: "When we placed the order in 2012 for our new fleet of trams the ITA had the vision for them being capable of running without overhead wires. The technology then was not sufficiently developed to incorporate into the Birmingham city centre extension.

"Provision was made within the contract that should technology catch up the new trams could be retro-fit-

ted with batteries. The application of battery technology on this scale in the West Midlands will be a historic first for the UK light rail industry."

Batteries will be fitted on the tram roof and will be recharged by overhead lines along other parts of the route. They will be ready to run when the extension to Centenary Square opens in 2019.

It also means Birmingham Eastside extension under the proposed HS2 station will not need expensive infrastructure works for overhead lines.

A NUMBER of Black Country and Staffordshire shops in the threatened Brantano chain have been saved.

The company went into administration on January 21, putting jobs at risk. But stores in Oldbury, Stafford and Cannock have been sold to a new owner called Alteri Investors along with a concession at a garden centre in Shenstone, near Lichfield.

In total, 1,372 jobs and 81 shops and 59 concessions have been saved in the deal.

The chain's outlet at Crown Wharf Shopping Park, Walsall was not included on the list.

Robert Moran, deals partner at PwC, who led the sales process, said: "From discussions held over the last few weeks, there was interest from a number of parties, both trade and private equity, for the Brantano business."

"Of this interest, the offer from Alteri represents the best outcome for creditors and employees.

Delighted

"We are delighted that 1,372 jobs have been preserved through the transaction and thank the Brantano team for working closely and collaboratively with us throughout what has been a difficult period for the business."

The administrators are looking for a buyer for the remaining 57 shops, including Walsall, and one concession. They will continue to trade while PwC is in talks with interested parties.

Tony Barrell, lead administrator said: "We continue to trade the remaining Brantano business whilst discussions with interested parties continue."

"Unfortunately, in the event further sales are not possible, redundancies will become inevitable. We are working closely with Brantano employees and offering every support possible through this difficult period."

Flourishing airport has best January

BIRMINGHAM Airport enjoyed its busiest ever January – with 666,681 passengers passing through it.

Numbers were up by nine per cent, or 55,000, on January 2015.

Demand for seats has increased on both long and short-haul routes, with the most significant growth again recorded on long-haul services, which were up by more than 18 per cent on the same month last year.

Paul Kehoe, the airport's chief executive, said: "This is an excellent start to the year and means we are now celebrating our 11th consecutive month of record breaking passenger figures. 2015 was a good year here at Birmingham Airport, overall we handled 10.2 million passengers, the most we've ever recorded."

"We expect the coming 12 months to be successful as we welcome more airlines. This Easter alone will see us introduce Qatar, CSA, Iberia and Blue Air to Birmingham, as well as the introduction by Emirates of its A380 aircraft."

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Walsall Squadron on a visit to RAF Lyneham during the 70s



Halesowen cadets show Air Commodore J Chamier a ground trainer



Wolverhampton cadets including Ray Simpson with their glider



Miles Messenger aircraft at Monmore Green ATC in 70s



AN ATC Slingsby T.31 glider at RAF Cosford

Air training corps that took off 75 years ago

THE Air Training Corps is celebrating 75 years. It began with the announcement in 1938 of the formation of the Air Defence Cadet Corps.

This would give 20,000 boys between the ages of 14 and 18 basic instruction in some of the things they would need to know to become airmen.

Air-minded youngsters flocked to join and on January 1, 1941, the Corps was taken over by the Air Ministry and renamed the Air Training Corps, with the motto Venture Adventure.

There were squadrons in almost every town. The boys learned drill with Lee-Enfield rifles, Morse Code, astro-navigation principles, aircraft recognition, and many squadrons had an old aircraft on which they could give airframe instruction.

Cadets went to local RAF stations to be given air experience flights.

MEMORY LANE

By Alec Brew

For instance Vic Thwaites from Brewood who was in D Flight of 1047 Squadron had six flights during the War, in Wellingtons at RAF Hixon, Ansons at RAF Halfpenny Green and an Oxford at RAF Whiston Aston.

He was also given 15 minutes instruction in a Link ground trainer, and early form of simulator, at RAF Perton.

Level

At an early stage it was decided that cadets should learn to fly, and the pre-war Slingsby Cadet was ordered in large numbers. Surprisingly this was single seat, and cadets learned at first to keep the wings level in a ground slide, then did low hops, then higher hops and finally a circuit.

The airspeed was controlled by the instructor at the controls of the winch.

Locally No.43 ATC Gliding School was established at Walsall Airport, and after the War moved to RAF Lichfield.

Ray Simpson of Fallings Park had a total of 48 instructions on a Cadet glider during 1948 at Lichfield, of which 15 were classed as 'slides', 15 as 'airborne slides', 9 as 'low hops' and 9 as 'high hops'.

Better sense prevailed after the War and two seat gliders were ordered for instruction, and local training centred on RAF Cosford.

The ATC still thrives today with both 1046 and 1047 Squadrons active in Wolverhampton, and other squadrons in Codsall, Sedgeley, Walsall and elsewhere.

The Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre is preparing an exhibition of the ATC's 75 Years, centred on three ATC gliders, and is appealing for the loan of photographs and memorabilia to help tell the full story.

Just pop in to the Centre any Sunday, or e-mail alecbrew@hotmail.co.uk



Les Broadfield and two other cadets of 1047 Squadron

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DAYS: 7 DEPARTS: Various dates



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This 5 day coach break staying at our Loch Awe Hotel includes a "Ceilidh Night" (Kay-lee), when you will enjoy typical Scottish entertainment with foot tapping music. There will be an excursion everyday including a cruise on Loch Lomond, Inveraray, Oban, The Sealife Centre, Fort William, Glencoe & Rannoch Moor.



www.LOCHS.COM

TOUR INCLUDES:

- 4 Nights Half Board
- Nightly entertainment
- Excursions

PICKUP FROM:

Birmingham,
Smetwick,
West Bromwich,
Dudley,
Wolverhampton,
Walsall

Holidays are fully bonded.
School Road, Gartcosh,
G83 8RW

01389 713713

5 DAY COACH BREAK TO SCOTLAND - £198

SUNDAY 3RD APRIL

Inversnaid Hotel Loch Lomond National Park

STB★★★

SPRING CEILIDH BREAK

This 5 day coach break staying at our Inversnaid Hotel includes a "Ceilidh Night" (Kay-lee), when you will enjoy typical Scottish entertainment with foot tapping music. There will be an excursion everyday including Oban, Glencoe, Rannoch Moor, The Falkirk Wheel - the world's only rotating boat lift, Callander & the Trossachs.



www.LOCHS.COM

TOUR INCLUDES:

- 4 Nights Half Board
- Nightly entertainment
- Excursions

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Birmingham,
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Holidays are fully bonded.
School Road, Gartcosh,
G83 8RW

01389 713713

Ed Byrne



Friday, 8pm

Town Hall, B'ham

The Munro-climbing and South America-exploring Mock The Week regular brings his new stand-up show Outside Looking In to the city as part of a 104-date British tour. Visit www.tshs.co.uk

POP & ROCK

Shuggie Otis - CANCELLED

Thu at 7pm - 11pm,
The Institute, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Paul Carrack

Sat at 7.30pm,
£28.50 - £38.50
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

The Boss UK: Springsteen Tribute

Fri at 8.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

The Billy Fury Years Show

Sun at 7.30pm, £18.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

Fun Lovin' Criminals

Thu at 7pm, £23.50
The Institute, Digbeth,
Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

The Doors Alive: The Doors Tribute

Sat at 7.30pm, £10 - £12
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 401211

UK Throwdown Tour: Max Raptor

Mon at 7pm,
The Rainbow,
Birmingham, B12 0LD.
Call 0121 753 1818

Lucy Spraggan

Fri at 6pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

Metal All Dayer

Sun at 3pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham,
B30 3DZ.
Call 0121 246 2273

Rhino's Revenge - CANCELLED

Sat at 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms
WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

Damien Dempsey

Thu at 7pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham,
B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

Wilson

Tue at 7pm,
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms,
WV1 1RQ. 0870 320 7000

Foals

Fri at 7.30pm,
Barclaycard Arena,
Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

THE SCREEN ON THE GREEN FILMS AT OLDBURY REP

Our Spring season starts with the latest Bond movie 'Spectre' on Friday 26th February and continues with the comedy 'Lady in the Van', starring Maggie Smith, and Oscar nominated, 'Brooklyn', 'Bridge of Spies' and '45' with Tom Courtney and Charlotte Rampling. Screening dates for these titles TBC.

All tickets still just £3.50 and start at 7.30pm.

FREE adjacent car park (CCTV) Lounge, Bar, Facilities for the disabled

Now booking! Box Office 0121 552 2761

Box Office open Monday evening from 7.30pm. Friday evening prior to main house production and the night of the production at 7.00pm

Spring Walk, Langley B64 4SP

Online bookings now available at our website:

www.oldburyrep.org

Jesse Malin



Tonight (Thu), 7pm

O2 Institute, B'ham

The New York rocker returns after two album releases last year, New York Before The War and Outsiders, and a reissue for his 2002 debut. Don DiLegro and Trapper Schoepp support. www.o2institutebirmingham.co.uk

JAZZ & BLUES

The Blues Band

Thu at 9.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston,
WV14 7LJ.
Call 01902 780 3333

Hot Ginger's Charity Ball

Sat at 8pm,
Hare & Hounds,
Kings Heath, Birmingham,
B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

The Mitch Perrins Atlantic Quintet

Fri at 5pm,
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Lunchtime Organ Concert: Thomas Trotter

Mon at 1pm,
Birmingham Town Hall,
B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

CBSO Youth Orchestra: Rachmaninov's Second

Sun at 7pm, £20
Symphony Hall,
Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Foals

Fri at 7.30pm,
Barclaycard Arena,
Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

The Great Songs Of Musical Theatre

Sun at 7.30pm,
Birmingham Town Hall,
B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

ZooNation: Into The Hoods: Remixed

Thu at 2pm, 7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Jukebox Sixties Show

Fri at 7.30pm,
Kidderminster Town Hall,
DY10 1DB.
Call 01562 732158

Birmingham Royal Ballet: The Dream & A Month In The Country

Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
7.30pm, £10 - £26
Birmingham Hippodrome,
B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Caravan Camping & Motorhome Show 2016

Tue at 10am - 6pm, Wed at 10am - 6pm,
The NEC Birmingham,
B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Check out full listings in the ticket in Friday's Express & Star

Foals



Friday, 7pm

Barclaycard Arena, B'ham

Oxford band Foals headline a big indie night out that will also feature a DJ set from local heroes Peace and support from fidgety art rockers Everything. Visit www.barclaycardarena.co.uk

THEATRE

The Gilded Merkin

Sun at 6pm - 11pm, £15
The Glee Club, Birmingham,
B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

Jersey Boys

Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
7.30pm,
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
WV1 2LT. Call 01785 254653

The Lost Things

Fri at 11.30am, 2.30pm, Sat at
11.30am, 2.30pm
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

The Musicians

Thu at 7.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

The Odyssey

Mon at 4.30pm, 7pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

40 Days In 40 Minutes

Sat at 5pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
B1 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Impossible

Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
7.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Breaking The Code By Hugh Whitemore

Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 7.30pm,
Wed at 7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm,
The Rose Theatre,
Kidderminster, DY10 2RX.
Call 01562 743745

CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

Rising Stars: Quatuor Zaire

Mon at 6pm - 9.30pm, £10

Birmingham Town Hall,

B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Sarah Nicolls: Moments Of Weightlessness

Fri at 1.10pm,

Barber Institute of Fine Arts,

University of Birmingham,

B15 2TS. Call 0121 414 7333

The Great Songs Of Musical

Theatre

Sun at 7.30pm,

Birmingham Town Hall,

B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Lunchtime Organ Concert:

Thomas Trotter

Mon at 1pm,

Birmingham Town Hall,

B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

CBSO Youth Orchestra:

Rachmaninov's Second

Sun at 7pm, £20

Symphony Hall,

Birmingham, B1 2EA.

Call 0121 780 3333

Foals

Fri at 7.30pm,
Barclaycard Arena,
Birmingham, B1 2AA.
Call 0121 780 4141

Hinds

Tuesday, 8pm

Hare And Hounds, Kings Heath

It is sure to be a full house for these Spanish girl power garage rockers who have caused a stir with punky lo-fi rock 'n' roll debut album Leave Me Alone. Visit www.hareandhoundskingsheath.co.uk

I Know All The Secrets In My World

Thu at 7.30pm,
The Drum, Aston on Carrant,
Birmingham, B6 4UU.
Call 0121 333 2400

Princes Ida

Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30/7.30pm,
Forest Arts Centre,
Walsall, WS3 1AG
Call 01922 452970

COMEDY

Ed Byrne: Outside Looking In

Fri at 8pm, £19 - £21
Birmingham Town Hall,
B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Comedy Carousel

Thu at 7.30pm,
The Glee Club,
Birmingham, B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

Chris Martin: This Show Has A Soundtrack

Fri at 7.30pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road,
Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

MET Comedy

Sat at 8pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

Jenny Eclair: How To Be A Middle Aged Woman (Without Going Insane)

Fri at 8pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre,
ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

Carl Hutchinson & Iain Stirling

Thu at 8pm - 11pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham,
B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

Sandi Toksvig: Politically Incorrect - SOLD OUT

Tue at 7.30pm,
Birmingham Town Hall,
B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

OTHER EVENTS

Caravan Camping & Motorhome Show 2016

Tue at 10am - 6pm, Wed at 10am - 6pm,
The NEC Birmingham,
B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Bard puts spring in step for ballet

THIS spring's 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare has inspired Birmingham Royal Ballet's spring season in the company's home city.

Last seen on the Birmingham Hippodrome stage with their sumptuous annual festive treat The Nutcracker, BRB return with a programme of three ballets, including two based on plays by the Bard.

BRB is featuring a double bill of Sir Frederick Ashton's classic works, which includes his 1964 ballet The Dream, based on Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, which opens the company's year-long Shakespeare commemoration. The Dream will be paired with the famous choreographer's 1976 ballet A Month In The Country, being performed for the first time by Birmingham Royal Ballet.

A Month In The Country was one of the last works Frederick Ashton made for The Royal Ballet and is set to stirring music by Chopin.

The company's spring programme will also feature a revival of Kenneth Macmillan's full length classic ballet Romeo and Juliet.

The Dream and A Month In The Country opened last night (Wednesday) and runs until Saturday. Romeo and Juliet will be presented from February 24 to 27.

Elegant

BRB spokeswoman Claire Lishman says: "In The Dream, love gets out of hand for mortals and fairies alike in an elegant and witty distillation of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. Alongside it, we offer A Month In The Country, inspired by Turgenev's play. Ashton captures the mood of the play through exquisite dance in this moving account of unrequited love."

On Romeo and Juliet, Ms Lishman adds: "Love at first dance, forbidden passions, dangerous secrets and fate combine in an exhilarating classic ballet."

Set to Prokofiev's soaring score, Romeo and Juliet tells the familiar tale of two young lovers at the mercy of powerful families and their own hearts. From the balcony scene's ecstatic pas de deux to the heart-breaking end, Romeo and Juliet has been an audience favourite since its first performance 51 years ago, when Margot Fonteyn and Rudolf Nureyev received 43 curtain calls.



Star-crossed dancers – Birmingham Royal Ballet's Jenna Roberts as Juliet and Iain Mackay as Romeo
Photo: Roy Smiljanic

Other highlights will include John Cranko's adaptation of The Taming of the Shrew for performance at the Hippodrome from June 16 to 18; and BRB Company Director David Bintley unveiling the world premiere of his interpretation of The Tempest this October.

Honesty best Halsey policy

HALSEY had an awesome 2015. The singer and songwriter from New Jersey, real name Ashley Nicolette Frangipane, topped polls for best breakthrough act, got to No2 in the US chart with debut album Badlands, was special guest on Justin Bieber's track The Feeling and sold out New York's Madison Square Garden.

Still only 21, the one-girl-phenomenon is about to release her latest track New Americana and perform her first gig in Birmingham, at the O2 Academy on Saturday, as part of a sold-out UK tour. Just two years ago she was playing acoustic cover sets at random bars in the American north-east, having left high school with a desire to become a musician.

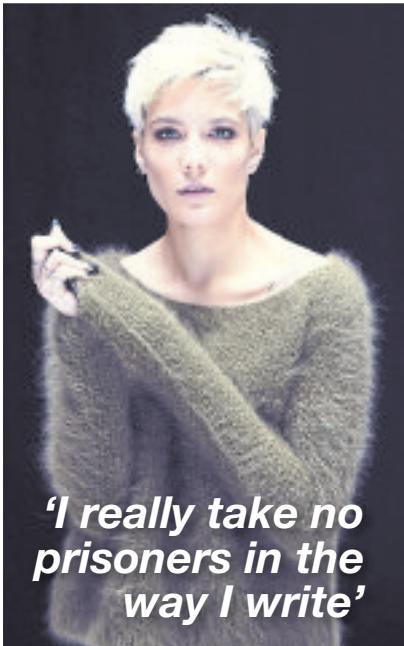
Early in 2014 everything changed because of one song, the appropriately haunting Ghost. She says: "Everyone I know in music was like 'the song starts with bridge and it's two minutes and 34 seconds long, you're making a mistake, that's not a single, that's not going to get anyone's attention'." Clearly her 70,000-plus Twitter followers who promptly downloaded it disagreed.

"People say I blew up over night," she says. "It took me two years. Sometimes I would be in the middle of Boston at 4am and would ask someone over Twitter if I could stay at their house."

Her music is autobiographical with places, names, even dialogue left intact.

"I'm open about talking about certain things that others may keep quiet," she says. "I want my music to be really authentic, candid, honest. I really take no prisoners in the way I write."

'I really take no prisoners in the way I write'



Some enchanted evening with CBSO

TOMORROW'S Friday Night Classics concert in Birmingham sees the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra paying tribute to Broadway legends Rodgers and Hammerstein.

Martin Yates will conduct the CBSO at the 7.30pm concert in Symphony Hall. They will be joined by the University of Birmingham Voices for songs from South Pacific, Carousel, The King and I, The Sound of Music and Oklahoma!

Special guests will include West End singers Robyn North, Sally Ann Triplett, Olivier Award nominated Michael Xavier and former Phantom Scott Davies.

See www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 345 0600.

Singers' songs with a message

FANS of singer-songwriters can catch up with some class acts.

Jesse Malin fine tunes songs from his reissued 2002 debut The Fine Art of Self-Destruction at the O2 Institute tonight (Thursday). Then tomorrow Lucy Spraggan plays songs from her We Are album at the O2 Academy, also in Birmingham.

Paul Carrack, of How Long and The Living Years fame, is in concert at the Symphony Hall on Saturday.

Protest singer and acoustic guitar troubadour Will Varley, who has supported The Proclaimers and Frank Turner, is at the Hare and Hounds in Kings Heath on February 25.

Foals galloping to stadium status

OXFORD band Foals play Birmingham Barclaycard Arena tomorrow night (Friday), the success of fourth album What Went Down having propelled them to stadium status. Don't miss support from quirky art-pop outfit Everything Everything.

Other highlights include Mystery Jets with songs from sixth and best so far album Curve Of The Earth at the O2 Institute in Digbeth tonight (Thursday).

On Saturday the notorious Fat White Family are at the O2 Institute, the same night Dudley outfit EoE play Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms. Blurryface duo Twenty One Pilots are at O2 Academy on Tuesday.



AMAZING MARCH OFFERS



Valid only until Monday 22 February 2016
New Bookings Only

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04	London Theatre – SUNNY AFTERNOON Inc Afternoon Tea Cruise	2	225.00	50.00	175.00	15	P&O Cruise to Holland – Meals, Live Entertainment & Amsterdam	2	159.50	10.00	149.50
04	London Theatre – LES MISERABLES	2	225.00	30.00	195.00	18	Torquay – 6 Course Dinners & Live Entertainment	3	189.50	30.00	159.50
04	London Theatre – WAR HORSE	2	225.00	30.00	195.00	18	Hampton Court Palace & Steam Railway	2	165.00	10.00	155.00
04	Hampton Court Palace – Flormania, Bluebell Steam Railway & Brighton	2	165.00	15.00	150.00	18	London Theatre – CHARLIE & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY OR MAMMA MIA Inc Afternoon Tea Cruise	2	225.00	25.50	199.50
05	Mystery Weekend	1	89.50	10.00	79.50	18	London Theatre – BEAUTIFUL	2	225.00	25.50	199.50
05	Murder Mystery Inc Salisbury & Winchester	1	95.00	10.00	85.00	19	London Theatre – BILLY ELLIOT OR WICKED	1	149.50	24.50	125.00
07	Isle of Wight – Shanklin	4	199.50	10.00	189.50	24	Luxembourg Easter Departure	4	275.00	25.00	250.00
11	London Theatre – WOMAN IN BLACK	2	195.00	40.00	155.00	25	London Theatre – MOTOWN	2	225.00	15.00	210.00
11	London Theatre – GUYS & DOLLS	2	225.00	50.00	175.00	26	Paris at Easter Hilton Hotel	3	235.00	40.00	195.00
11	Peak District & Kedleston Hall	2	159.50	10.00	149.50	26	Lake Garda – Italy Inc Venice	7	525.00	30.00	495.00
11	Brooklands & Blenheim Palace	2	169.50	10.00	159.50	28	Bruges	3	235.00	40.00	195.00
11	Wonders of Wiltshire	2	139.50	10.00	129.50	29	Downton Abbey	2	199.50	10.00	189.50
12	London Theatre - PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	1	139.50	14.50	125.00						
12	Murder Mystery	1	95.00	10.00	85.00						
14	Valkenburg, Holland – Inclusive	3	235.00	35.50	199.50						

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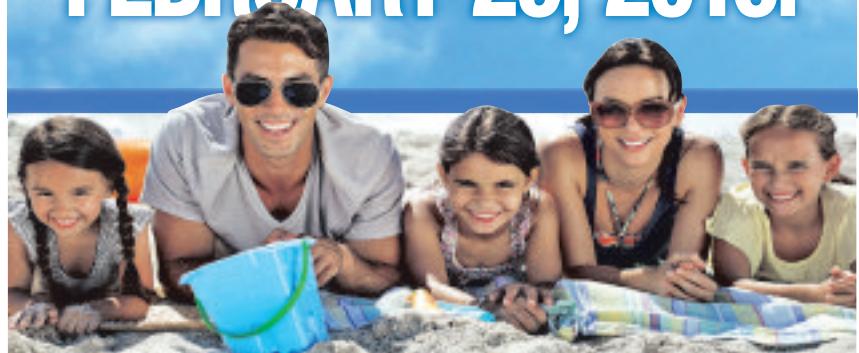
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CHOICE



Rose Farquhar

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **(R) 12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **1.00** Live Athletics: Glasgow Indoor Grand Prix. **2.00** The Headuntington: The Emirates Arena. **4.30** BBC News. **4.45** Regional Programme. **4.55** MOTD Live: The FA Cup. Bournemouth v Everton (Kick-off 5.15pm).

7.15 The Voice UK. It's the final round of blind auditions and it's bound to be a tense time for all as the coaches fill the last few places on their teams. Paloma Faith, Boy George, Will.i.am and Ricky Wilson will only want the best singers to take through to next week's battle rounds, when their acts will be pitted against each other in head-to-head knockout performances. This week's prospective stars are teenager Faith Nelson, barefoot vegan Rachel Ann, soldier Dave Barnes, hairdresser Aaron Hill and Londoner Rose Farquhar, all of whom take to the stage in the hopes of progressing to the next round of the contest.

8.35 The National Lottery: Win Your Way Live. More than a couple Mike and Lucy from Willmington include a dream honeymoon on their perfect prize wishlist, and Shane Richie challenges them to answer questions in various categories to win their chosen items. Plus, Gaby Roslin is joined by guest Pixie Lott, performs live, and pushes the all important button for the Lotto and Thunderball draws.

9.25 Casually. Connie needs to prove her love for Grace, but has little time, and singer Hannah Spearritt returns as the mugger who attacked Noel, this time mixed up in a drugs deal.

10.15 BBC News: Weather. **10.35 Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights.** Gabby Logan presents action from the latest FA Cup fifth-round ties, including Arsenal v Hull City at Emirates Stadium, and Watford v Leeds United at Vicarage Road.

11.35 Film: Shanghai Noon. (2000) A 19th-century imperial guard to the Emperor of China is flung into the Wild West on a mission to rescue a kidnapped princess. Comedy Western, starring Jackie Chan.

1.20 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.25 BBC News.**

BBC2

6.00 Animal Park. **(R) 7.00 Film:** This Land is Mine. (1943) **8.40 Film:** The Deadly Companions. (1961) **10.10 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **11.10 Lobo: The Wolf That Changed America.** (2011) **12.00** Martin: The India Connection. **(R) 12.45 Rick Stein's India.** (R) **1.45 Escape to the Country.** (R) **2.30 Big Dreams Small Spaces.** (R) **3.30 Earth's Greatest Spectacles.** (R) **4.30 Final Score.** **5.15 Flog It!** (R) **5.30 Back in Time for the Weekend.** (R)

6.30 Dad's Army. The older members of the platoon are threatened with being made air-raid warden, so they take drastic action in a bid to appear younger – with Mainwaring even wearing a toupee. Comedy first aired in 1972, starring Arthur Lowe, John Le Mesurier and Clive Dunn. (R)

7.00 Film: Cast Away. (2000) A manager for an American courier service has to fend for himself when a plane crash leaves him stranded alone on a desert island. Initially panic-stricken, he overcomes his terror to survive for four years on his own before building a raft and setting off on an epic journey back home.

Adventure drama, starring Tom Hanks, Helen Hunt, Nick Searcy, Lori White and Chris Noth.

9.15 Kipling's Indian Adventure. Ex-soldier and author Patrick Hennessey follows the journey of the 16-year-old Rudyard Kipling made in 1888. Retracing Kipling's voyage from Lahore in modern-day Pakistan to the north Indian hill station of Simla, known as the summer capital of British India, Hennessey explores how the young author's encounters with various rulers, officers, subalterns – and the common-folk they ruled – came to inform his Nobel Prize-winning literature.

10.15 Live at the Apollo. Russell Kane comedies an evening of stand-up at London's Hammersmith Apollo, performing himself and introducing roundtrips by guests Róisín Conaty and Nick Helm. (R)

11.00 Film: The Ides of March. (2011) A presidential campaign worker must decide where his loyalties lie as dark secrets come to light.

Drama, directed by and starring George Clooney. With Ryan Gosling.

12.35 Film: Surviving Summer. (2009)

2.00 This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Bottom Knocker Street. **6.15 Bottom Knocker Street.** (R) **6.25 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures.** (R) **6.55 Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.05 Super 4.** (R) **7.15 Louped.** (R) **7.30 Storytime: SCi.** (R) **7.35 Scrambled: Mr Potato.** (R) **7.50 Scrambled: Nerds & Monsters.** (R) **8.10 Scrambled: Jessie.** (R) **8.30 Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show.** (R) **9.25 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **10.15 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.20 ITV News: Weather.** **12.30 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **1.30 Judge Rinder.** (R) **2.35 Tipping Point.** (R) **3.35 The Chase.** (R) **4.35 Regional Programme: Weather.** **4.45 ITV News: Weather.** **5.00 Film:** Despicable Me 2. (2013) Premiere. A reformed criminal mastermind who has abandoned his wicked ways for a life of fatherhood and jam-making helps a secret agent to bring one of his fellow evildoers to justice. The villain in question has stolen a dangerous experimental serum with the power to turn harmless animals into ravenous monsters. Animated comedy sequel, with the voice of Steve Carell.

7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. (2002) The presenter duo return with their live entertainment show with Michael Sheen serving as guest announcer, and Wet Wet Wet taking part in tonight's Singalong Live.

8.30 Take Me Out. An athlete from Birmingham, a mechanic from Edinburgh, a Bedfordshire-based golfing coach and a potato-farmer from Co Down seek to win over Paddy McGuinness's 30 single women.

9.45 The Jonathan Ross Show. Twilight Saga and Cuckoo star Taylor Lautner joins Jonathan in the studio, along with comedy actor and broadcaster Rob Brydon, and Australian-born UK tennis star Johanna Konta, who made headlines back in January as she became the first female British player to reach a Grand Slam's quarter-finals since 1984.

10.45 ITV News: Weather.

11.00 Film: Nutty Professor II: The Klumps. (2000) Bumbling scientist Sherman Klump tries to rid himself of his troublesome alter ego Buddy Love, but his experiment backfires. Comedy sequel, with Eddie Murphy.

12.55 Jackpot247. **3.00 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **3.50 ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

6.15 Frostgun Invitational. **7.05 Freddie World Tour.** **7.30 The Grid.** **8.00 Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30 The Morning Line.** **10.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **10.50 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **11.30 The Simpsons.** (R) **12.00 The Simpsons.** **1.30 Channel 4 Racing.** Live coverage from Ascot, Haydock Park and Wincanton. **4.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **4.25 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.25 Come Dine with Me.** (R)

6.00 Come Dine with Me. The final dinner party in Suffolk is hosted by anti-social behaviour officer Rachel, who hopes to win over her guests with an evening of comfort food and a few tricks up her sleeve. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales journey along the 'London Ring', as it's known to narrowboat lovers, in a voyage of discovery through their home city. Starting in Brentford, they follow the Union Canal, and then the Regent's Canal until it meets the Thames at Limehouse. Along the way, they meet up with fellow actors Andrew Sachs and Ian McKellen, and visit the cemetery at Kensal Green, where their old friend, playwright Harold Pinter, is buried. (R)

8.00 Penelope Keith's Hidden Lives. The actress learns about life in Cumbria, explores areas including Coniston, Morecambe Bay and Grasmere, and meets a community buying a local mountain.

9.00 Film: RoboCop. (2014) Premiere. A corporation that creates robots sees a chance to diversify into law enforcement when a Detroit cop is critically injured in a bombing. He is rebuilt as a crime-fighting cyborg, but struggles to regain his free will from his creators' control. Sci-fi thriller remake, starring Joel Kinnaman.

11.20 Film: Apocalypto. (2006) A Mayan tribesman captured for human sacrifice escapes into the jungle in a bid to save his family. Mel Gibson's historical adventure, starring Rudy Rucker.

12.15 Super Casino. **3.10 Never Teach Your Wife to Drive.** (R) **4.00 Police Interceptors.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** (R) **9.30 The Saturday Show.** Live. **11.30 Funniest Falls, Falls & Flops.** (R) **12.00 Police Interceptors.** (R) **1.00 Police Interceptors.** (R) **2.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** (R) **3.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** (R) **4.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** (R) **5.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** (R)

6.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.

Two ageing gents get stuck up in a dispute between a landlord and a tenant who refuses to move out, while on the south coast, debt collection from a Turkish restaurant gets complicated. (R)

7.00 World War II in Colour. The Allied forces' preparations for the Normandy landings, including their attempts to fool the Germans into thinking the main attack would be in the Pas de Calais. (R)

7.55 The Gadget Show. Jason Bradbury, Amy Williams, Ortis Deley and Jon Bentley report from CES in Las Vegas, the world's largest consumer tech show, revealing the must-have gadgets of 2016. (R)

8.00 5 News Weekend.

9.00 The Championship: Football League League. Tonight, Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's matches in the Championship, including Cardiff City v Brighton & Hove Albion and Brentford v Derby County.

10.00 Goal Rush: Football League. Tonight, Kelly Cates and George Riley present a round-up of all the goals and talking points from League One and League Two, including Barnsley v Doncaster Rovers and Barnet v AFC Wimbledon.

10.25 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. Benson and Stabler are faced with a dilemma when a child abuse suspect offers to reveal the identity of a controversial civil rights group's leader in exchange for an amnesty. (R)

11.20 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. A couple are found murdered in a truck, prompting the detectives to investigate a Mexican drug cartel linked to one of the victims – but the case proves more complex than expected. (R)

12.15 Super Casino. **3.10 Never Teach Your Wife to Drive.** (R) **4.00 Police Interceptors.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 How Earth Made Us. **8.00 The Inca: Masters of the Clouds.** **9.00 Trapped.** **10.40 Rod Stewart Live at Hyde Park.** **11.40 Imagine – Rod Stewart: Can't Stop Me Now.** **1.05 The Joy of Easy Listening.** **2.35 Top of the Pops: 1981.** **3.15 Sounds of the Eighties.** **3.45 Close.**

ITV2

11.05 Ninja Warrior UK. **12.10 Scorpion.** **1.05 Film: The Perfect Man.** (2005) **3.05 Film: Along Came Polly.** (2004) **4.50 Catchphrase.** **5.35 Film: The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor.** (2008)

7.45 Film: After Earth. (2013) **9.45 Take Me Out – The Gossip.** **10.45 biza Weekender.** **11.45 The Keith Lemon Sketch Show.** **12.20 Film: Scary Movie V.** (2013) **1.55 Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands.** **2.45 Teleshopping.** **3.45 Close.**

ITV3

12.35 Sherlock Holmes: The Eligible Bachelor. **2.45 The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes.** **3.55 Bertie and Elizabeth.** **6.00 Michael McIntyre's 10.00 Lewis.** **12.00 Blue Murder.** **1.35 Man About the House.** **2.00 ITV3 Nightscreen.** **2.30 Teleshopping.**

ITV4

11.00 Storage Wars. **11.25 Storage Wars: Texas.** **1.25 Storage Wars 2.20 Film: Death of a Gentleman.** (1969) **4.15 Film: Superman.** (1978) **7.10 Film: Police Story.** **9.00 Film: Collateral Damage.** (2002)

11.10 Film: Collateral Damage. (2002) **1.30 Film: Child's Play 2.** (1990) **3.00 Teleshopping.**

E4

11.30 The Goldbergs. **12.00 Rude (ish).**

1.30 The Judds. **3.00 Film: Fury.**

4.15 Film: Shorts. **5.00 The Big Bang Theory.** **9.00 Film: Friends with Benefits.** (2011) **11.15 Gogglebox.** **1.25 Virtually Famous.** **2.15 The Inbetweeners.** **3.05 The IT Crowd.**

3.55 New Girl. **4.20 Brooklyn Nine-Nine.** **4.40 Revenge.**

Film 4.

11.00 Dr Seuss' The Lorax. (2012) **1.00 Step Up 3.** (2010) **3.10 Journey to the Center of the Earth.** (2008) **5.05 The Day the Earth Stood Still.** (2008) **7.10 Just Married.** (2003) **9.00 About a Boy.** (2002)

1.00 A womanizer who poses as a father to meet single women changes his ways after befriending a lonely youngster. **Romantic comedy, with Hugh Grant, Toni Collette and Nicholas Hoult.** **11.00 The Man with the Iron Fists.** (2012) **Martial arts adventure, starring RZA.** **12.50 Sinister.** (2012) **3.05 Close.**

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CHOICE



Tom Hiddleston

The Night Manager
(BBC1, 9pm)

New series. Adaptation of John Le Carré's novel, starring Tom Hiddleston, Olivia Colman and Hugh Laurie. A former soldier working in a Cairo hotel discovers evidence against international arms dealer Richard Roper, but his attempt to help British intelligence to capture the criminal has disastrous consequences. Five years later, he is based in Switzerland, working at a hotel that he discovers is regularly frequented by Roper. Determined to make amends for his previous failure, he reunites with his contact at British intelligence and they form a plan to infiltrate the arms dealer's inner circle.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **8.00** Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News - Weather. **1.15** Songs of Praise. **1.30** Lifeline. **2.00** Escot to the Country. (R) **2.30** The Great Sport Relief Bake Off. (R) **3.30** MOTD Live: The FA Cup. Chelsea v Manchester City (Kick-off 4.00pm). **6.00** BBC News. **6.15** Regional Programme. **6.25** *Dickensian*. Arthur visits Fagin and acquires the services of Bill Sikes in the hope he can put a stop to the wedding, while Compesyon makes a heartfelt confession to Amelia. Last in the series. **7.15** *Countryfile*. Matt Baker and Ellie Harrison explore Staffordshire, visiting a farming school and a bat box, before presenting a report on a possible treatment for an incurable tree disease, including Weather for the Week Ahead. **8.00** *Call the Midwife*. Poppy is rocked by a series of violent attacks on women, and a prostitute is too ashamed to report what she knows—but her actions lead to a dangerous man roaming the streets, with devastating consequences for the residents of Nonnatus House. A mother tries to keep her daughter's pregnancy a secret to avoid gossip, putting her life in danger. The Turners go on a long overdue holiday, but the weather ruins their plans. **9.00** *The Night Manager*. New series. Adaptation of John Le Carré's novel, starring Tom Hiddleston. A former soldier has a chance encounter with an arms dealer, and helps British intelligence to capture him. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** *Match of the Day: FA Cup Highlights*. Action from today's fifth-round fixtures, which were Blackburn Rovers v West Ham United, Tottenham Hotspur v Crystal Palace, and Chelsea v Manchester City. **11.15** *The Super League Show: World Club Series Special*. Tanya Arnold presents action from the World Club Series, featuring three matches. **12.00** Film: *The Walker*. (2007) **1.40** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.45** BBC News.

BBC2

6.20 *The A to Z of TV Gardening*. (R) **7.05** *The Secret History of the British Garden*. (R) **8.05** *An Island Parish*. (R) **8.35** *Countryfile*. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** *James Martin: Home Made Simple*. (R) **12.15** *Food: The Best Dishes Ever*. (R) **12.45** *Food: The Best Dishes Ever*. (R) **1.15** *Food: The Best Dishes Ever*. (R) **1.30** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **1.35** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **1.40** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **1.45** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **1.50** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **1.55** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.00** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.05** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.10** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.15** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.20** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.25** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.30** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.35** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.40** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.45** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.50** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **2.55** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **3.00** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **3.45** *Bobsleigh and Skeleton World Championships*. **5.15** *Ski Sunday*. **6.00** *MOTD: FA Cup 6th Round Draw*. Mark Chapman presents coverage of the quarter-final draw, as the remaining eight clubs learn who they will face, with a Wembley semi-final awaiting the winners. **6.20** Film: *I Am Number Four*. (2011) A teenager with special powers is forced to live as a fugitive, constantly moving from place to place with his protector to avoid aliens who seek to destroy him. His nomadic existence is threatened when he falls in love, just as he begins to realise the origin of his extraordinary abilities. Sci-fi thriller, starring Alex Pettyfer, Timothy Olyphant and Teresa Palmer. **8.00** *Dragons' Den*. Deborah Meaden, Nick Jenkins, Peter Jones, Touker Suleyman and Sarah Willingham cast their eyes over more business ideas, including a recipe for ice cream that is healthier than fruit and a new design of headphones that do not cover the wearer's ears. Plus, a busker gets a lesson in margins. Last in the series. **9.00** *Let's Play Darts for Sport Relief 2016*. New series. Gabby Logan hosts the pro-celebrity tournament in aid of charity. The first rounds pit Great Davies against Jordan Stephens and Mike Tindall against Katherine Ryan. **10.00** *The People v OJ Simpson: American Crime Story*. Fact-based crime drama about the trial of former American football star and actor OJ Simpson for the murders of his wife and her friend, Cuba Gooding Jr stars. (R) **10.55** Film: *Memento*. (2000) A man searches for his wife's killer in spite of the short-term memory loss he sustained during the same attack. Christopher Nolan's thriller, with Guy Pearce. **12.45** Film: *The Night of the Generals*. (1967) **3.05** *Sign Zone: Countryfile*. (R) **4.00** *Holby City*. (R)

ITV

6.00 *CITV: Bottom Knocker Street*. **6.15** *Bottom Knocker Street*. (R) **6.25** *Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures*. (R) **6.35** *Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures*. (R) **6.50** *Signed Stories: Share a Story*. (R) **6.55** *Sooty*. (R) **7.05** *Sooty*. (R) **7.15** *Little Einsteins*. (R) **7.30** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.35** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.40** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.45** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.50** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.55** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.00** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.05** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.10** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.15** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.20** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.25** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.30** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.35** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.40** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.45** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.50** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.55** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.00** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.05** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.10** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.15** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.20** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.25** *ITV News*. **9.30** *Murder, She Wrote*. (R) **10.25** *The Jeremy Kyle Show*. (R) **11.25** *The Jeremy Kyle Show*. (R) **12.30** *ITV News: Weather*. **12.35** *The Jeremy Kyle Show*. (R) **1.40** *Judge Rinder*. (R) **2.40** *Catchphrase*. (R) **3.40** *ITV: Live and Let Die*. (1973) *James Bond* spy adventure, starring Roger Moore. **6.00** *Regional Programme: Weather*. **6.15** *ITV News: Weather*. **6.30** *Planet's Got Talent*. The best and worst clips from the global *Got Talent* franchise, featuring a water-skiing squirrel, a stunt driver and a multi-talented beat boxer. **7.00** *Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands*. Slean prepares for his wedding to Kela, but an unexpected development proves more than he can cope with. Abreacan's fixation on Herot leads him to neglect his own people. **8.00** *Vera*. A fisherman's body is found tangled up in a North Sea trawler's net. Vera and her team investigate with the help of the local harbourmaster, and find the dead man's sons pointing the finger at the owner of a fish market, with whom they have a long-running feud. Retracing the dead man's steps, Vera discovers when he drowned and tracks down a waitress who may have been one of the last people to see him alive. However, the case becomes more complicated when a witness runs away and a boat belonging to the dead man's sister-in-law goes up in flames. Last in the series. **10.00** *ITV News: Weather*. **10.15** *Rookies*. Mark is called to help a man who has been attacked with a baseball bat, while Dan attends a near-fatal stabbing during his first solo shift. Last in the series. **11.15** *Premiership Rugby Union*. **12.15** *Jackpot247*. **3.00** *ITV News: Weather*. **5.05** *The Jeremy Kyle Show*. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.15 *How I Met Your Mother*. (R) **6.40** *Bottom Knocker Street*. **6.15** *Bottom Knocker Street*. (R) **6.25** *Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures*. (R) **6.35** *Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures*. (R) **6.50** *Signed Stories: Share a Story*. (R) **6.55** *Sooty*. (R) **7.05** *Sooty*. (R) **7.15** *Little Einsteins*. (R) **7.30** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.35** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.40** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.45** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.50** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **7.55** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.00** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.05** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.10** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.15** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.20** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.25** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.30** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.35** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.40** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.45** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.50** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **8.55** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.00** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.05** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.10** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.15** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.20** *Scrambled: Scrambled*. (R) **9.25** *ITV News*. **9.30** *Murder, She Wrote*. (R) **10.25** *The Secret Life of the Zoo*. Documentary revealing the secret life of the animals of Chester Zoo, one of Britain's most popular zoos, using new micro-rico technology to capture the behaviour of the animals and their close relationships with their keepers. In the first episode, the zoo's Asian elephant family welcome a new arrival. Grumpy matriarch Thi has been pregnant for almost two years and is reaching the end of her tether. She's given birth to a stillborn baby in the past, so the keepers have a close eye on her. Cameramen also follow Red panda Jung, who has been getting the cold shoulder from his partner Nima since they had two cubs. (R) **8.00** *The Jump*. Davina McCall presents the first bout of winter sports action, as the remaining contestants compete in a mogul skiing event. The loser from each race will then have to face the jump, with one of them being eliminated from the competition. **9.00** *Film: The World's End*. (2013) Premiere. A 40-year-old man who refuses to grow up drags four reluctant childhood friends back to their home town to recreate a pub crawl they attempted in their teens. As they work their way round the 12 local bars, they stumble on a threat to the entire human race. Sci-fi comedy, starring Simon Pegg. **11.10** *Film: The Eagle*. (2011) A Roman centurion and his British slave journey into the wilds of Scotland to recover the standard of a lost legion. Action adventure, starring Channing Tatum and Jamie Bell. **1.10** *Film: Superstars*. (2011) A 36-year-old man who has been attacked with a baseball bat, while Dan attends a near-fatal stabbing during his first solo shift. Last in the series. **1.15** *Embarrassing Bodies: The 36-Stone Woman*. (R) **2.05** *Celebrity Come Dine with Me*. (R) **4.15** *Phil Spencer: Secret Agent*. (R) **5.45** *Angels of Jarm*. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 *Milkshake!: Peppa Pig*. **6.05** *Bananas in Pyjamas*. (R) **6.20** *Angelina Ballerina*. (R) **6.30** *Bob the Builder*. (R) **6.45** *Ticky Toc*. (R) **6.55** *Zack and Quack*. (R) **7.05** *Roobarb and Custard*. (R) **7.15** *Mr Tumble*. (R) **7.30** *Postman Pat*. (R) **7.40** *A Little Bit of Luck*. (R) **7.55** *Pip Ahoy*. (R) **8.05** *Blaze and the Monster Machines*. (R) **8.20** *Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom*. (R) **8.45** *Wanda and the Alien*. (R) **9.00** *Toby's Travelling Circus*. (R) **9.15** *Jelly Jamm*. (R) **9.30** *LazyTown*. (R) **9.55** *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. (R) **10.30** *The Championships: Football League Tonight*. (R) **11.30** *Goal Rush: Football League Tonight*. (R) **12.00** *Funnies*. (R) **12.30** *Police Interceptors*. (R) **1.30** *Police Interceptors*. (R) **2.30** *The Burbs*. (R) **3.45** *The Money Pit*. (R) **4.30** *Tom Hanks*. (R) **5.30** *ITV News*. **6.00** *Counting Cars*. (R) **6.35** *The Smurfs 2*. (2013) **7.00** *Framed*. (R) **7.35** *The Smurfs 2*. (2013) **8.00** *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway*. (R) **8.45** *9.00* *Ibiza Weekender*. (R) **9.00** *Delivery Man*. (2013) **10.10** *Film: Not Another Teen Movie* (2001) **2.00** *Totally Bonkers*. **2.25** *Guinness World Records 5.55* *ITV2 Nightrunner*. **3.45** *Bertie and Elizabeth*. (R) **4.40** *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. (R) **5.45** *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*. (R) **6.00** *Midsummer Murders*. (R) **6.00** *Banning*. (R) **6.30** *Round the Twist*. (R) **7.00** *John Adams*. (R) **7.30** *Caroline Quentin: A Passage Through India*. **8.00** *Mrs Biggs*. (R) **8.05** *Film: The Bucket List*. (2007) **1.00** *Ghostboat 2.20*. **1.15** *A Touch of Frost*. (R) **1.45** *On the Buses*. (R) **2.00** *Judge Judy*. (R) **2.55** *Movies Now*. **3.30** *Nightscreen*. **4.15** *Counting Cars*. (R) **4.35** *Film: Death of a Gunfighter*. (1969) **5.30** *Film: Nevada Smith*. (1966) **6.15** *Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol*. (1987) **8.00** *Premiership Rugby Union*. (R) **9.00** *Film: City of Bones*. (2013) **1.15** *Ax Men*. **2.10** *The Car Chasers*. (R) **2.50** *ITV4 Nightrunner*. **3.00** *Teleshopping*. **4.15** *Film: Maid in Manhattan*. (2002) **2.35** *The Goldbergs*. (3.35) *The Big Bang Theory*. **9.00** *Marvel's Agents of SHIELD*. **10.00** *Tattoo Fixers*. (R) **11.00** *Rude Tube*. **12.05** *The Inbetweeners*. **1.10** *The IT Crowd*. **2.10** *The 100*. **2.55** *Marvel's Agents of SHIELD*. **3.40** *Hollywoods*. **4.15** *Magic in the Water*. (1995) **1.00** *The Legend of Zorro*. (2005) **3.45** *Beaches*. (1988) **6.15** *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*. (2003) **9.00** *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*. (2013) **1.15** *The Crazies*. (2010) **1.35** *Angels of Jarm*. (R) **2.45** *Feast of Love*. (2007) **3.45** *Close*.

DIGITAL

BBC Four **7.00** *Jigs & Wigs: The Extreme World of Irish Dancing*. (8.00) *Andre Previn at the BBC* **9.00** *Storyville: The Black Panthers*. **10.45** *Film: Easy Money III: Life Deluxe*. (2013) **12.40** *Troubadours*: The Rise of the Singer-Songwriter **2.05** *Sounds of the Eighties* **2.15** *Great Singer-Songwriters at the BBC **3.35** *Close*. **ITV2** **11.40** *Take Me Out* **12.55** *Take Me Out - The Gossip* **2.00** *Best of You've Been Framed* **3.05** *Film: The Smurfs 2* (2013) **5.05** *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* **6.45** *Film: Back to the Future* (1985) **9.00** *Ibiza Weekender* **10.00** *Film: Delivery Man* (2013) **12.10** *Film: Not Another Teen Movie* (2001) **2.00** *Totally Bonkers* **2.25** *Guinness World Records 5.55* *ITV2 Nightrunner*. **ITV3** **11.35** *Bertie and Elizabeth*. (R) **12.45** *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. (R) **1.40** *Film: The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*. (R) **2.45** *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*. (R) **3.55** *Lewis*. **6.00** *Midsummer Murders*. (R) **6.00** *Banning*. (R) **6.30** *Round the Twist*. (R) **7.00** *John Adams*. (R) **7.30** *Caroline Quentin: A Passage Through India*. **8.00** *Mrs Biggs*. **8.05** *Film: The Bucket List*. (2007) **1.00** *Ghostboat 2.20*. **1.15** *A Touch of Frost*. (R) **1.45** *On the Buses*. (R) **2.00** *Judge Judy*. (R) **2.55** *Movies Now*. **3.30** *Nightscreen*. **4.15** *Counting Cars*. (R) **4.35** *Film: Death of a Gunfighter*. (1969) **5.30** *Film: Nevada Smith*. (1966) **6.15** *Film: Police Academy 4: Citizens on Patrol*. (1987) **8.00** *Premiership Rugby Union*. (R) **9.00** *Film: City of Bones*. (2013) **1.15** *Ax Men*. **2.10** *The Car Chasers*. (R) **2.50** *ITV4 Nightrunner*. **3.00** *Teleshopping*. **4.15** *Film: Maid in Manhattan*. (2002) **2.35** *The Goldbergs*. (3.35) *The Big Bang Theory*. **9.00** *Marvel's Agents of SHIELD*. **10.00** *Tattoo Fixers*. (R) **11.00** *Rude Tube*. **12.05** *The Inbetweeners*. **1.10** *The IT Crowd*. **2.10** *The 100*. **2.55** *Marvel's Agents of SHIELD*. **3.40** *Hollywoods*. **4.15** *Magic in the Water*. (1995) **1.00** *The Legend of Zorro*. (2005) **3.45** *Beaches*. (1988) **6.15** *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*. (2003) **9.00** *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones*. (2013) **1.15** *The Crazies*. (2010) **1.35** *Angels of Jarm*. (R) **2.45** *Feast of Love*. (2007) **3.45** *Close*.*



FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

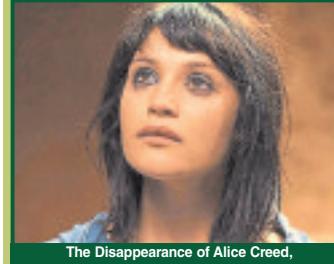
Righteous Kill, Channel 5, 10.55pm

Two veteran New York detectives are assigned the case of a murdered pimp. They realise they are dealing with a vigilante dishing out lethal punishment to those who have escaped the justice system, and as more dead criminals are found, they suspect the killer may be a fellow cop. Crime thriller, starring Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, Carla Gugino, John Leguizamo and Don Wahlberg. (2008)

TUESDAY

Honor Student, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A writer is confronted by an ex-convict he once taught as part of a prison education programme, who accuses him of stealing her idea for a novel. Obsessed with revenge, she plans to murder him - but first she intends to make him suffer by ruining his reputation and destroying his marriage. Thriller, starring Josie Loren and Niall Matter. (2014)



The Disappearance of Alice Creed,
Friday, BBC2, 11.35pm

WEDNESDAY

The Lookout, BBC1, 11.45pm

A teenager's promising future is cut short when a car crash leaves him with brain damage that affects his memory. Taking a job as a janitor at a bank, he falls under the influence of crooks led by a former school friend. However, as he becomes aware of their plan to pull off a robbery, he makes a desperate attempt to stop them. Drama, with Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Jeff Daniels and Isla Fisher. (2007)

THURSDAY

Stolen from the Womb, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A psychotic stalker gives a pregnant woman a labour-inducing drug, before kidnapping her newborn child. Drama inspired by true events, starring Larisa Oleynik, Laura Mennell and Sebastian Spence. (2014)

FRIDAY

The Disappearance of Alice Creed, BBC2, 11.35pm

Two criminals kidnap the daughter of a wealthy family, with the intention of demanding a ransom. However, the hostage is not the helpless victim she appears, while she and both her captors have secrets that threaten to throw the plan into disorder. Thriller, with Gemma Arterton and Martin Compston. (2009)

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Stars are out to shine at star-studded bash

The Brits returns to the O2 tonight to bring us a much-needed annual dose of music industry glitter, awkward award presentation and headline-generating performances during the dark days of British winter.

Tonight's headline act is Rihanna, who is back to perform for the fourth time, following the long-awaited release of her eighth album, ANTI.

It's likely that she'll perform her smash-hit single, Work, which topped the charts in 90 countries.

For the Barbadian singer, it'll give her an opportunity to warm up before her world tour returns to the UK in June; and for her fans, it's the first Brit Awards performance since 2012, when she blew the crowd away with a rendition of We Found Love.

British songstress Adele was the first act to be named on this year's bill, which was considered quite a coup for the organisers.

Back in 2011, she performed a spine-tingling version of Someone Like You, but the year after she made headlines for swearing at "the suits"

who forced host James Corden to cut her speech short, largely because Blur had bumbled around on stage before her.

Fresh from their half-time show alongside Beyoncé at the Superbowl earlier this month, Coldplay will also be performing.

Chris Martin and co have suggested that their new album, A Head Full of Dreams, may be their last.

But, as they proved in a barnstorming London gig earlier this year, the record sounds as good live as any of their previous work.

Having recently beaten The Beatles' record for having the most singles in the UK top 40 at any one time, Canadian singer Justin Bieber is also sure to be a hit with the Brits crowd.

There will also be performances from Jess Glynne, who rose to success in 2014 after being featured on Clean Bandit's single Rather Be, and James Bay, who won the Critics' Choice Award 2015.

Canadian singer-producer The Weeknd and 2011 X-Factor winners Little Mix will also be on stage.

Finally, there will be a touching tribute to the much-missed David Bowie following his death on January 10.

Bowie was a two-time Brit winner and became the oldest recipient of the Best British Male Solo Artist award two years ago. On the awards front, Adele leads the pack with four nominations for the newly designed trophies.

She will be battling it out for the coveted Album of the Year award alongside Coldplay, Florence + the Machine, James Bay and Jamie XX.

The presenters of the Brits is always a big issue, and we seem to reminisce every year, who can forget Samantha Fox and Mick Fleetwood?

Thankfully this year's ceremony is in good hands as it will be fronted by last year's hosts Ant and Dec.

About returning, the pair said: "We really loved hosting the show last year."

"In all honesty we only intended to do it for one year but had such a good time we are thrilled to be doing it again."

"We had a great night, enjoyed a glass of champagne or two! So this year... more of the same!"



Ant and Dec host, The Brit Awards 2016, Wednesday, ITV, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Fresh Meat

Channel 4, 10pm

New series. The comedy returns for a fourth and final series, with the prospect of the real world looming large for the student housemates. JP's brother pays an unexpected visit and tells him it is time to knock down, while Howard has created a secret revision den in the cellar. Meanwhile, Oregon attempts to win a prestigious scholarship in America. Vod comes up with a scheme to help with her money troubles, and Kingsley is on the lookout for love, but possibly in all the wrong places.

Cuckoo

BBC1, 10.45pm

After the first series in 2012 the departure of Andy Samberg initially looked to be the end of the line for this show, one of BBC Three's most successful sitcoms. However the writers pulled off a Cuckoo coup when they recruited Taylor Lautner to fill the big-name American gap in season two. This third series opener picks up six months after Dale's dramatic departure during the 2014 Christmas special, and Rachel is still heartbroken, but she has managed to salvage a friendship with her jilted former fiance Ben. However, just as life is about to return to normal in the Thompson household, a

transformed Dale returns from China to shake things up again. Meanwhile, Ken and Lorna are preparing for the birth of their unplanned baby, and son Dylan gets ready to leave for university.

TUESDAY

The Inspectors Are Coming

ITV, 7.30pm

Cameras follow UK law enforcement teams, beginning in Cleethorpes where beach inspectors struggle with their new powers to fine as it goes against their usual laid back style. In Dumfries and Galloway, experienced law enforcers Erin and Jim are dishing out £80 penalties to anyone caught dropping a cigarette butt. Meanwhile, in the London borough of Newham, John and Terry face one of their busiest nights ever - could they be about to beat their record for the most number of noise complaints?

WEDNESDAY

The Great Sport Relief Bake Off

BBC1, 8pm

Sarah Millican hosts as actress Alison Steadman, comedian Ade Edmondson, singer Will Young

and impressionist Morgana Robinson bake for Sport Relief. They must face three challenges set by judges Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry, with the overall winner receiving the coveted Star Baker Apron. For the signature challenge, they must create an open-top pie, before attempting to make a salmon roulade in the technical. Finally, the celebrities

must use cupcakes to create a showstopper representing a momentous life experience. Last in the series.



The Great Sport Relief Bake Off,
Wednesday, BBC1, 8pm

THURSDAY

The Great British Sex Survey

Channel 4, 10pm

So much for érotic sex please, we're British - Channel 4 has discovered via a specially commissioned survey that UK residents are very much in touch with their sexuality. This programme takes a closer look at the results, revealing the nation's top 10 kinks and lifting the lid on some surprising practices.

Experts, including psychotherapist Philippa Perry and Belgian sexologist Goedele Liekens, explore where unusual sexual desires come from, and investigate why some people only need a come-hither look to get them going, while others require something a little more elaborate. The Great British Sex Survey also asks just what convinced us to shed our repressed image and start unbuttoning, and hears from the ordinary people who get up to extraordinary things in the bedroom.

FRIDAY
Comedy Playhouse: Hospital People
BBC1, 10.35pm

The BBC's revived Comedy Playhouse strand is back with three new pilots, all hoping to become fully fledged sitcoms. We'll soon see Alun Armstrong and Alison Steadman in *Broken Biscuits*, written by Early Doors creators Craig Cash and Phil Mealey, while Nigel Havers and Sarah Hadland are teaming up for *Jack Doherty's Stop/Start*, but we begin with *Hospital People*. The mockumentary follows a group of characters united by the fact that their lives revolve around the local hospital - and that they are all played by co-writer Tom Binns. His creations include manager Susan Mitchell, spiritualist porter Ian D Montfort, and someone who will be familiar to fans of Binns' stand-up, deluded DJ Ivan Brackenbury.

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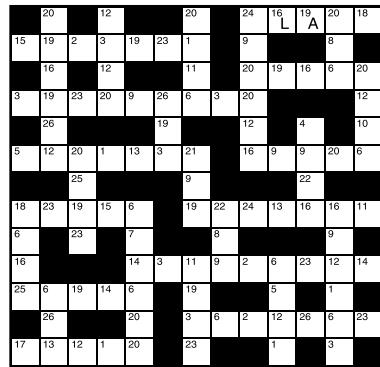
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
K	B	E	G	S	L	U	O	I	P	Z	M	F	X	J	N	R	Q	D	W	Y	H	T	A	C	V

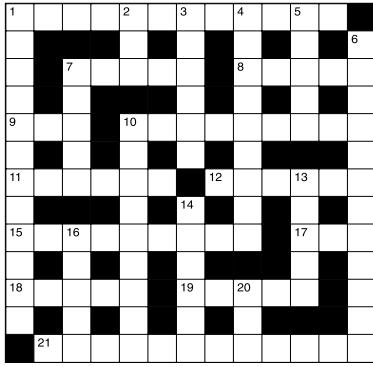
Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Mislay a Gilbert and Sullivan opera and get annoyed (4,8)
2. Widespread alarm of a hundred getting shocking pain (5)
3. See 9 Across
4. 9,19 & 8Ac. Presumably no cold-blooded pursuer would be! (3,2,3,5)
5. Charles goes to the end of the lane in pursuit (5)
6. The direct opposite of open revelations? (5,7)
- 7 & 2Dn. Darlings were abducted by him (5,3)
10. Has no further use for fragments (6)
15. Backer to drink strong ale (9)
17. Fabulous winger to show back of stability, we hear (3)
18. Elegant dresser found in Scotland and Yorkshire (5)
19. See 9 Across
21. They conduct the fans to hearken the chiefs (5-7)



Quick Clues:

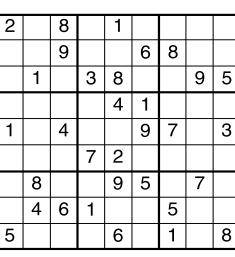
Across

1. Uneasy (12)
7. Put off (5)
8. Fire-raising (5)
9. Recede (3)
10. Professional to use the office machine - an original model (9)
13. Shocking rage before the end of the debate, but don't fall out (5)
14. Constitutional street register (6)
16. Misappropriate as nippers do (5)
20. Drink for most of the side (3)

Down

1. Genuineness (12)
2. Consume (3)
3. Anger (6)
4. Amorphous (9)
5. Prospect (5)
6. Stoppage (12)
7. Exclude (5)
10. Idiotic (9)
17. Immerse (3)
18. Heading (5)
19. Object (5)
21. Formula (12)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

8	7	2	9	6	1	3	5	4
3	6	1	7	4	5	8	9	2
9	4	5	2	8	3	6	1	7
5	2	3	4	7	6	9	8	1
6	7	8	5	9	4	2	3	6
3	1	9	6	7	4	5	8	2
2	3	8	6	1	4	1	7	9
4	5	7	8	1	9	2	3	6
1	9	6	3	2	7	5	4	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 4 Abandon; 8 Hot dog; 9 Balmer; 10 Retain; 11 Keeper; 12 Parental; 18 Organist; 20 Career; 21 Slight; 22 Copious; 23 Reveal; 24 Wealthy. Down: 1 Therapy; 2 Statue; 3 Motion; 5 Blackleg; 6 Number; 7 Obscured; 13 English; 14 Ringlet; 15 Solemnly; 16 Pepper; 17 Danish; 18 Jockey; 19 Jockey; 20 Object; 21 Halfway; 22 Brutal; 9 Affront; 10 Object; 11 Up roar; 12 Vicarage; 18 Interval; 20 Debase; 21 Fondle; 22 Several; 23 Pistol; 24 Feather. Down: 1 Absolute; 2 Subject; 3 Cancer; 5 Affluent; 6 Furore; 7 Annual; 13 Alienate; 14 Avidity; 15 Elderly; 16 Severe; 17 Patent; 19 Exotic.

Thinking space



Quiz

1. Where is the seat of the U.N. International Court of Justice?
2. What branch of the arts do you associate with Jean Ingres?
3. How many popes have been called Leo?
4. Which body of water separates Italy from Sicily?
5. Of which country was Milton Obote president?
6. What is pinchbeck?
7. Who founded Singapore in 1819?
8. What does the Russian word samovar mean?
9. Of which country was Mario Soares made president in 1986?
10. Where was the liner Queen Elizabeth destroyed by fire in 1972?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 The scar left by a healed wound; 2 1968; 3 Hokkaido; 4 Saigon; 5 French; 6 Cantilever; 7 El Cid; 8 112; 9 1972; 10 15 million.

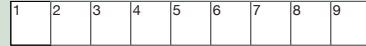
Niner:

CURTAINED

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

7393 gives a game,
241182 gives a second game,
23456827 gives a third game.



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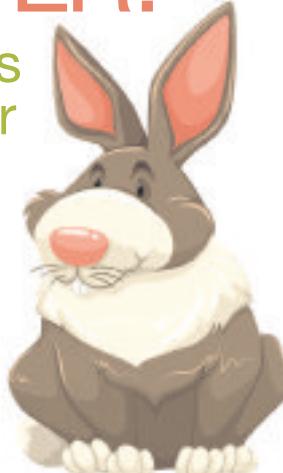


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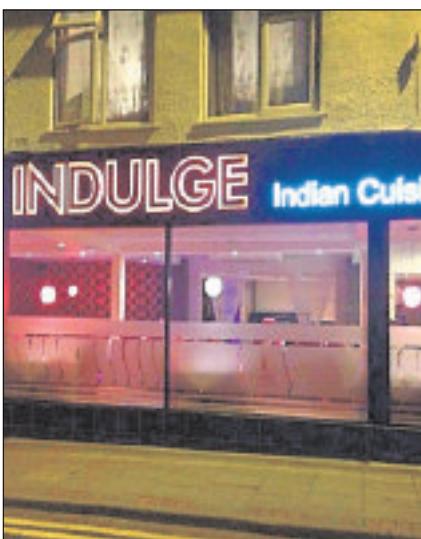
Shahin Ahmed, second from left, with his waiting staff and cookery team



The tender lamb shank was beautifully cooked



The plush interior of Indulge restaurant, Cannock Road, Chadsmoor



Indulge is coming up to its second birthday

Take time to Indulge in popular area's new restaurant on block

WITH a cluster of Indian restaurants in such a small area, competition is fierce. But why not Indulge in the new kid on the block?

Indulge, on Cannock Road, Chadsmoor, has gone through a number of incarnations over the years. However, just shy of its second birthday, it has already lasted longer than any of its predecessors – and has risen up the Trip Advisor rankings.

Of all the eateries in the Cannock Chase area, Indulge is the second highest ranked Indian restaurant.

Unsurprisingly, proprietor Shahin Ahmed, otherwise known as Raj, is proud of the achievements of himself and his staff, and points to the quality of its food and service, as well as the hard work that has gone into the business for its success.

By Mark Shipp

"Things are really picking up and we are very happy at how things are going," he said, adding that the support and feedback from customers was inspiring them to grow even further.

Raj believes the introduction of Sunday five-course set meals, at £8.95, and Tuesday and Wednesday eat-as-much-as-you-like gourmet nights at £9.95 have also gone some way towards its new-found status.

It's a very easy restaurant to spot, so the lack of success under previous guises is hard to fathom.

It's certainly plush inside, with 110 covers, though it does look as though it could hold more.

And here's a twist. If you fancy a private function, you can have the back room – complete with dance floor, to yourselves

– and with your own choice of images projected on to the wall.

The restaurant is not licensed, so we took our own alcohol.

Food prices are generous and there is an extensive list of Chef's Exclusive dishes and House Specials. And if variety is the spice of life, some have had better tell my other half, for whom there is no need to even offer a menu. "If they don't have butter chicken or makhani chicken, I'm not going in," she might as well say . . .

Fuss

They did, indeed, have butter chicken, so that's one happy customer to start with.

It was straightforward choice from our dining companion, too – but then when does a teenage girl ever make a fuss? At least she pored through what was on offer before deciding on her favourite tikka masala.

We were treated to a special platter starter to begin with, including chicken korma, korahi kebab and moglai chicken – the latter, chicken marinated with garam masala and yoghurt and cooked with pepper, onions and garlic, was divine, but then so was the unexpected lamb shank we were served ahead of our starters.

Of course, there was little room for much else, but I still had to try my sea bass jhal fry main course. The fish was beautifully cooked and it had a hidden kick to it. But mixed with the lemon rice accompaniment it was the perfect blend for the palate.

Indulge is closed on Mondays, except for Bank Holidays. Opening hours are from 5.30pm-11pm. Special offers are available to mark its second year anniversary on March 15.

For more details, or to book a table at Indulge, call 01543 500771.

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Three-storey town house is in a desirable location



IN a desirable location, this end town house in Abberley Close, Halesowen, has three floors.

With a re-fitted shower room, it is for sale through Hicks Hadley at £169,950. With double glazing and gas central heating it has a driveway leading to a garage, an entrance hall with stairs off, a dining kitchen with laminate flooring and three spot lights, a good-sized lounge with bay window, a second reception room/bedroom with wardrobes, a bathroom, second floor landing, three upstairs bedrooms. There are also gardens. Contact Hicks Hadley on 0121 5856667 or visit www.hickshadley.com website.



Traditional semi with extended dining room



THIS three-bedroomed semi-detached property in Dennis Hall Road, Stourbridge, has an extended dining room and kitchen.

Located in a quiet residential location close to the town centre, it is for sale through Select Property Management at £167,495 with no chain.

With double glazing and gas central heating, it has an entrance hall, under-stairs storage, a lounge with a coal/log fire with a tiled hearth and feature surround, a dining room with a coal/log fire with tiled hearth and feature surround, a kitchen with a built-in cooker and a four-ring hob. There are three bedrooms (one with fitted furniture), a fully tiled shower room, front garden with parking for two cars, garage and rear garden with two patios and lawn.

Contact Select Property Management on 01384 277701 or visit the website at www.selectsalesandlettings.com



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NEW

ROWLEY REGIS, Spring Vale Road £650 pcm+fees

An opportunity to acquire a well maintained traditional three bedroom detached property situated in a popular residential location in a quiet cul-de-sac close to local schools, amenities and road links. Comprises of a large living room, fitted kitchen with a double range cooker, downstairs w.c., double & 1 single bedroom/study. Bathroom with shower, driveway/garage. A lovely property, not to be missed. MINIMUM CONTRACT 12 MONTHS. EPC: C



LET



HALESOWEN, Long Lane £225 pcm+fees

A Victorian style semi-detached house in the centre, convenient & popular location. This lovely property has recently been refurbished and comprises of: entrance hall with Minton flooring, front dining room, lounge, fitted kitchen, utility room, 3 good size bedrooms, bathroom with shower and rear garden. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Nimmings Road £650 pcm+fees

Large end terraced property close to Blackheath Town Centre & Rowley Regis Train Station. This property features lounge, new fitted kitchen/dining area, 3 bedrooms, ensuite shower room, house bathroom with shower, central heating, double glazing, front & rear gardens with garage to rear of property and driveway parking for up to 3 cars. EPC: D



NEW

HALESOWEN, Spring Street £595 pcm+fees

An unfurnished semi-detached house a short distance from local shops, numerous bus routes and Coton Lane Primary School. Comprising 3 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, lounge, gas central heating, double glazing, bathroom with shower, garage and driveway parking, front and rear gardens. EPC: TBC



NEW

HALESOWEN, Dudley Road £575 pcm+fees

Centrally located in Halesowen Town Centre with good access links to the railway and Birmingham. Ground floor comprises of: entrance hall, open plan lounge/kitchen, diner, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower. Also benefiting from allocated parking, gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: C



NEW

ROWLEY REGIS, Habberley Road £575 pcm+fees

This unfurnished mid terraced house is located close to local shops, and minutes away from J2 of the M5. Briefly comprising of 3 bedrooms, spacious lounge, fitted kitchen, utility room, house bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden. On road parking. EPC: TBC



NEW

HALESOWEN, School Lane £550 pcm+fees

A 2 bedroom cottage of immense character in the central Halesowen area is now available, front reception room featuring beamed ceiling, wooden floor, fireplace, country style kitchen with dining area, stairs leading to 1st floor double bedroom with fitted wardrobes, bathroom with corner bath and electric shower, 2nd floor double bedroom also with fitted wardrobes. Not to be missed. EPC: D



NEW

HALESOWEN, Narrow Lane £475 pcm+fees

Ground floor flat in a great location. Features lounge/diner with laminate flooring, fitted kitchen with white goods, double glazing, 2 double bedrooms, neutral decor, electric heating, communal gardens and a parking space. Offered unfurnished. Available from 1st March. EPC: TBC



NEW

QUINTON, College Road £475 pcm+fees

Large flat available above a shop close to direct bus links to Birmingham comprising of lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, 2 large double bedrooms plus extra study/storage room, white bathroom with shower, electric plug in heating. Available Now. EPC: G



LET

CONVENIENTLY located for Brierley Hill Town Centre and Merry Hill. A stunning refurbished ground floor apartment set in quiet surroundings. This lovely apartment featuring a brand new fitted kitchen, 2 large double bedrooms, spacious lounge, new bathroom with shower, allocated parking. EPC: TBC



NEW

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A MAN WITH A VAN Single items,
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Removal needs. 07429 453206
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Home, Office,
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House clearances.
Quality service guaranteed
lowest rates
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MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof
repairs, fascias and gutters. Call
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skip hire

**BLITZ
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AFFORDABLE SKIPS
2-50 YARD SKIPS
AVAILABLE
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MONDAY-SATURDAY
7AM-6PM
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Express & Star

THIS SPACE
COULD BE
PROMOTING
YOUR
BUSINESS

Every day our
customers get a
great response
from Classified
Advertising.

So could you by
calling our friendly
experienced Sales
Advisors on
01902 319191.

equestrian corner

ALL READERS are advised to
check if Horses have the required
Passport information.

DRESSAGE SADDLE, Passier
Grant, Gilbert, 171/2ins, medium
fitting, good condition, cost £1,500,
bargain £275. 01952 750821.

guns & dogs

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS
Advertisers must ensure that
they meet all necessary legal
requirements for owning and
using guns.

RAPID 7 MK1, 177, full kit. £800.
BSA meteor, 22, mint condition.
£250. 01785 714660.

pets corner

JACK RUSSELL Chihuahua
puppies 8 weeks old, wormed,
mom and 165, 01384 78588.

KITTENS ready for new homes in 1/
2 weeks. black and fluffy. Small
charge. Phone or text 07969
172646.

TROPICAL FISH namely large speci-
mens. Offers. 01785 273639.

WANTED Poodle or Cross
Swiss white, black, good kind,
loving home waiting, approx two
years upwards. Call 01902 608107.

overseas property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek
independent legal advice before
entering into any financial commit-
ments.

properties wanted

WE PAY 100% of purchase price



We buy any house

- FAMILY BUSINESS
- COMPLETION TO SUIT YOU
- FAST FRIENDLY SERVICE
- NO FEES/FREE SOLICITORS

WE ALSO BUY LAND

30
yrs

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or 01902 628047 24/7

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**FAST CASH
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Friendly, local company here to help you 7 days a week. Est. 10 years.

Home Cash Buyer
Sell today, sign today, complete when u wish
Houses/Land Required

Ring Paul 24/7 local on
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Sandwell Area Call 0121 696 4154
Walsall & Cannock Area Call 01922 432049
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www.homecashbuyer.co.uk

**accommodation
to let**

A TWO BED FLAT of Tettenhall Rd, CH, DG. Off road parking. £15,150. pw 01902 340073 / 07770 660636.

NOTICE TO READERS It is an offence to contravene the Consumer Protection from Distance Selling Regulations Act 1993, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particular premises to

DUDLEY 3-bed, unfurnished, double glazing, No Pets / DSS. £575pcm. 07875 049184

DUDLEY FURNISHED Bedsit, own bath/kitchen. £65-£90. pw. Mature DSS considered. 07550 002549.

SELDLEY ONE BED self contained flat, suit single, mature person. No DSS/ref's required. 07948 182489.

7
Jobs

drivers

DELIVERY DRIVER We are looking to employ a salesperson to join our expanding family company. The job involves calling on existing clients. Experience not necessary. Email CV to jthalesowen@gmail.com

**employment
wanted**

DRIVER very experienced, 7.5 tonne licence, van, lorry, seeks any work, full, part time or casual, CPC, any trade. 01922 512935.

PARCE TIME delivery job required, for female driver experienced in local deliveries. Please contact Michelle on 07779 650640.

**RETIRING TIME SERVED
CARPENTER / JOINER**

Requires casual / part time work. Own van / tools.

01384 375672 / 07527 360303.

full time - general

**WINDOW/CURTAIN WALLING
INSTALLERS** & Site Glaziers Required For Commercial Contracts Experience & Ability to Drive Essential Immediate Start Required

**part time -
general**

BOOKKEEPER
Part time - Halesowen

Balancing accounts, completing VAT returns checking & processing company bank statements.

Dealing with financial paperwork and filing.

Dealing with customers & suppliers via email and telephone.

To be successful in application you need to have the following:

Previous bookkeeping experience or a book keeping qualification is essential.

Excellent customer service skills.

Good Maths & English are required. Be energetic and determined

Apply with CV to tb@unisol.co.uk

cars under £1500

**ADVERTISERS ARE
REMINDERED**

that the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

CITROEN C31 4 petrol, 02 reg, 11,000 miles, 5dr, silver, MoT, new clutch, brake pads, shoes £800 ono. 07497 263503.

CITROEN PICASSO AUTO, 06, 65,000 miles, 12 months MoT, clean inside and out. £1,000. o.n.o. 07855 946489.

NISSAN ALMERA TINO, 2003, 91,000 miles, blue, electric windows, air bag, air con, alarm, MoT, central locking, ps, sunroof, £300. 07957 491522.

PEUGEOT 206, diesel, 1.4, 2002, good runner / condition. £30 per year road tax. £550. 07758 089629.

ROVER 75 Tourer, 03 reg, FSH, one owner from new, genuine 61,000 miles, immaculate condition. £1,295. 07956 670563.

SUZUKI VITARA 1600 GREEN, 92,000 miles, 1600, MoT, 92,000 miles, £250. Telephone 07851 289020 after 4pm.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.7DTI, diesel, X reg, white, full MoT, owned last 8years, excellent condition, multi function steering wheel, 136k radio/CD, fitted never used electric tow bar, cloth interior, clean, very reliable, £600 ono. 07866 750420.

**8
Motoring**

cars over £1500

**AUDI A4 CONVERTIBLE
3.0, TDI, S LINE QUATTRO**

06 reg, one previous owner, 155,000 miles, full Audi Service History, 12 months MoT, recent service, fully loaded, full leather interior, super condition.

£7250 ono.
07748 281876.

properties wanted

EVERY TIME!

WE PAY 100% of purchase price

We buy any house

• FAMILY BUSINESS

• FAST FRIENDLY SERVICE

• COMPLETION TO SUIT YOU

• NO FEES/FREE SOLICITORS

• WE ALSO BUY LAND

**30
yrs**

HONDA ANF125 INNOVA 07, 17k, MOT to 07/17, new paint, 2 keys, excellent condition, Haynes manual, lock and chain. £800. 01902 787432.

scraps vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is illegal to sell the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/meta for cash.

MCB

**TOP PRICES PAID FOR
ALL SCRAP CARS,
VANS, BIKES, CLASSICS**

Tel: 01902 408176

**1000's of parts
available at all times**

MONMORE RD, WV1 2TZ

**ABC AUTO SALVAGE
WANTED URGENT**

Scrap & MoT Failed Best

Prices Paid. Etc. Registered

Scrap. Always Available

0121 557 0800 or 0121 557

0400. Evening 07813 184611

Oldbury Area.

Photo appreciated, (will return)

Box Number P20233,

Express and Star,

Queen Street,

Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

**ATTENTION GENTLEMAN
55 TO 63 !**

I am a sincere, caring, easy going and loving lady, 59 years old, who WLMT a tall, medium build, genuine male, for romantic nights in/out, who has a GSOH and who enjoys the nice things in life.

Photo appreciated (returned).

Box Number P20233,

Express and Star,

Queen Street,

Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

BRERLEY HILL BULLETS

Charter Standard Community Status Club.

All Managers minimum FA Level 1 and CRC Checked.

The following Teams are looking for Players:

U9's West require experienced

**GOALKEEPER & OUTFIELD
PLAYERS.**

U13's South require experienced

OUTFIELD PLAYER.

Call Daniel 07767 684557.

U11's Girls

2015/16 Season require

GOALKEEPER

current school year 4 and 5.

Contact David Gregory 07949 878441.

NICE LADY 50

Homely, slim and attractive with 18 year old Daughter, car owner and employed.

Wishes to meet nice, sensible,

honest gentleman, 50 - 57.

For Friendship, possible lasting

relationship.

Photo appreciated, (will return)

Box Number P20234,

Express and Star,

Queen Street,

Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

sports clubs

BRERLEY HILL BULLETS

Charter Standard Club

Looking for Under 9's

Goalkeeper and Outfield

Players.

Players for Under 10's, Under

12's, Under 13's and Under

17's/18's.

Also looking for Managers and

Coaches.

Contact Tony on

07977 308183 and Keith on

07896 666589.

HALAS HAWKS U11'S

Are looking for a

DEFENDER

to add to a great set of Players.

Training on Wednesdays,

6-7pm.

If interested contact Phil

on 07866 369854.

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully request advertisers that is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

WITHYMOOR COLTS

Charter Standard Community Status Club.

All Managers minimum

FA Level 1 and CRC Checked.

The following Teams are

looking for Players:

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**GOALKEEPER & OUTFIELD
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U11's Girls

2015/16 Season require

GOALKEEPER

current school year 4 and 5.

Contact David Gregory 07949 878441.

**public & legal
notices**

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES

For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to

Marie Hogg on

01902 713146

or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk

(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

**9
Local
Information**

**10
Personals**

general

DISABILITY TALENT SHOW

Do you have a talent, live in the Black Country and have a disability. Come and take part. Alan 07905 261135.

AUTOMATIC

**VW GOLF DIESEL AUTO-
MATIC**

T reg New MoT, Cambelt, service etc, excellent condition, any trial, reliable £1,250. 07800 637961/01902 753545.

VW GOLF ESTATE 2002, 205,000 miles, blue, long MoT, diesel, £800 ono. 07867 458869.

classic cars

WANTED, CLASSIC Cars. Private

cash buyer. Instant cash settle-
ment. Any age. Any condition.

01630 652993 or 07773 462797.

**commercial
vehicles**

LANDROVER DEFENDER 110

TDS, 2003, 115,000 miles, MoT, one owner, very clean, £6,000. 07768 841443.

VAUXHALL VIVARO 2700CDTI

2008, 60,000 miles, high mileage, FSH, MoT December. £3,250. 07948 309727.

driving tuition

Homer's

Mini, Clio, Corsa, Fiesta, Punto, 207, KA, Fiat 500, Yaris.

10 Hours £89! Five Hours £50!

2 HOURS £45! 2 HOURS £30!
MALE & FEMALE INSTRUCTORS

MANUAL & AUTOMATIC

ADNP/DI REQUIRED. Gift vouchers available for £10

07432 458100 / 01562 870050

01384 234954 / 0121 5640090

01902 508005

www.homersdrivingschool.co.uk

motorbikes

BMW R1100GS 1999 T reg, red, 40k

miles, full luggage, new tyres and

stator motor, excellent condition,

£3,000 ono. 07491 068850.

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Buy Local, Sell Local

01902 317878

Classified Ads

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Here's how to use your dating service ...

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0844 381 5936

and follow the simple instructions

YOU can now Date ONLINE or via your mobile just visit:

<http://dating.expressandstar.com>

THE biggest UK on-line database of 17 million UK REAL users waiting to meet you.. visit..

<http://dating.expressandstar.com>

Single Women

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

MICHELLE 39yr old nurse, slim, petite, blonde, eyes looking, to enjoy life with similar romantic, caring guy. Single dad welcome. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420791

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent. 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

YVONNE, single mum, happy with life, but would like to meet someone to share fun times with. Tel: No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420269

SUE, 38yrs, passionate, broadminded and feisty seeks discreet fun with Mr Wrong? Tel: 0906 515 3035 Box 413007

48 year old, slim, green eyed female, n/s, likes meals out, local theatre, live local bands, nights in, looking for a gentleman, 48-52, for friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420839

JANE, young, 41, very broadminded sees chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: No: 0906 515 3011 Box: 409715

FEMALE, 37, new to area, would like to meet nice trustworthy man, for friendship hopefully more. Text only to mailbox: 5392585

LUCY first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual flings. Looks/age unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3027 Box: 420237

CAROL 37, attractive slim blonde, curves in all the right places, nice personality, good company, looking for caring man for fun times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420757

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

DEBS lonely 40's female with no ties, GSOH, N/S, seeks same thing, nice life partner, for similar soul mate to be happy together with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420729

KAREN, 42yrs, attractive and broadminded, seeks no strings fun with chap any age, must be discreet. Tel: 0906 515 3039 Box: 407953

BEV 30yr old curly attractive female, likes music, travel, animals, cosy nights in front of a log fire, looking for affectionate male for good times. Tel: No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420715

ROSIE, 43yrs, bored and lonely, I don't get out much but would like to meet a nice chap, married or single, fun only pls. Text only Box: 407825

SUE, 46, confident professional, sporty/active, seeking sensitive interesting guy for intimate evenings in with great food and conversations. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420701

JENNI, hairdresser, brunette, caring and fun. WLTM, chap any age, must be discreet with car, I have a nice home to meet in. Text only Box: 4139156

CAROLINE, 42yrs, slim attractive blonde, varied interests and solvent, WLTM honest male of any age. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420685

KAREN, curly brunette, 42yrs loves men of all ages and sizes but must make me laugh. I am married with open marriage. Text only Box: 4020257

CHRIS, 67, brunette, cuddly, WLTM caring, kind gentleman, for days out, meals out, walks etc and for just being together. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420667

LILY, genuine lady looking for a genuine man. I like cosy nights in and am a smoker. Text only mailbox: 5372466

TRISH, 44, tall slim young/good looking GSOH, professional, solvent, OHAC, affectionate and loves TLC, WLTM male who also likes to be in a loving relationship, 39-50yrs. Tel: No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420601

SAMANTHA pretty brunette, very busty 36, intelligent, independent with a real lust for life, seeks big-hearted stocky male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420599

JULIA, 47, looking for genuine, reasonably attractive male friend, may to lead to more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419695

MADDIE extremely passionate female 37, seeks reliable male to enjoy the finer things in life and tactile relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420563

CHRIS, 40, attractive slim sophisticated redhead, seeking male 30-50's to relax with and get to know. Discretion assured. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420491

PROFESSIONAL black female age 52, enjoys evenings and days out, would like to meet similar Midlands male. Text only to Mailbox no: 5315901

SALLY, 46, slim attractive feisty redhead, intelligent, easygoing, WLTM similar male for friendship and more, looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420475

LOUISE, 47, youthful looking female looking for spontaneous male to put some love and lust back into life. Call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420445

ALEXA 49 - slim, attractive, long-haired music loving female, with many interests including dining out, the arts, photography. WLTM similar male. Text only to Mailbox no: 5345662

MAGGIE, 72 yrs young, good sense of humour, well presented. WLTM kind, sincere chappie to share coffee and a chat. Text only to Mailbox no: 5310043

LOUISE, 35, dark hair, blue eyes, attractive ex air hostess, looking for fun times with older male for romantic nights in and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420043

JULIE, 47, blonde brown eyes, size 12, varied interests, loves cuddling, kissing and showing affection, seeks similar energetic male friend for TLC. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 4200701

JOANNA, 36, petite, auburn hair, friendly, looks seeking loves older male for fun nights out and cosy nights in. Maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419595

CHARLENE, 24, petite curly young woman, seeks similar cheeky, fun loving guy for lots of fun and loving. ACA. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419597

JOANNA, 36, petite, auburn hair, friendly, looks seeking loves older male for fun nights out and cosy nights in. Maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419595

CHARON, 32, attractive black single mom of one, very tactile and passionate, WLTM male 45-65yrs for fun meets. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419597

JOAN 35 yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTM passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419597

MARI, 43, fun blue-eyed blonde, attractive, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417

AMANDA, 50, widow, likes swimming, horse riding, keep fit, clay pigeon shooting, GSOH, NS, non drinker, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415211

CURVY, farm girl at heart, 32, 5ft 10, single mom, caring, kind, shy, likes walks, cooking WLTM tactile male farmer for LTR. Text only to Mailbox no: 5076001

FEMALE, 36, pretty, looks seeking male for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 4195429

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JOANNA, 36, petite, auburn hair, friendly, looks seeking loves older male for fun nights out and cosy nights in. Maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419595

CHARON, 32, attractive black single mom of one, very tactile and passionate, WLTM male 45-65yrs for fun meets. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419597

JOAN 35 yr old blue eyed blonde, outgoing, friendly, WLTM passionate guy to share good wine, good conversation, flirting and fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419597

MARI, 43, fun blue-eyed blonde, attractive, seeks similar male to have a laugh with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419417

AMANDA, 50, widow, likes swimming, horse riding, keep fit, clay pigeon shooting, GSOH, NS, non drinker, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415211

CURVY, farm girl at heart, 32, 5ft 10, single mom, caring, kind, shy, likes walks, cooking WLTM tactile male farmer for LTR. Text only to Mailbox no: 5076001

FEMALE, 36, pretty, looks seeking male for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 4195429

MAGGIE, 72 yrs young, good sense of humour, well presented. WLTM kind, sincere chappie to share coffee and a chat. Text only to Mailbox no: 5310043

LOUIS, 35, dark hair, blue eyes, attractive ex air hostess, looking for fun times with older male for romantic nights in and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420043

JULIE, 47, blonde brown eyes, size 12, varied interests, loves cuddling, kissing and showing affection, seeks similar energetic male friend for TLC. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 4200701

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Cactus is looking sharp

By Sharon Walters

The Citroën Cactus may have an unusually quirky image but it's a joy to drive and offers excellent fuel economy.

We shouldn't have been surprised when the rather unusual Citroën Cactus arrived on our streets. Looking a little like a chunky child's toy or something from Thunderbirds, it follows on from all those great quirky cars that the French company used to give us.

In the past it was a company that dared to be different and brought us very individual cars like the DS, 2CV (remember the one with the soft top?), the SM, the CX and the BX. And not so long ago the Xantia Active, the C6 and the C4. They weren't always suc-

cesses but we certainly remember them, if only for their looks.

Now we have the Cactus and its timing couldn't have been better. Let's face it, crossover vehicles had become so popular they had moved from the alternative to a comfortable family hatch. We now have a crossover that looks unlike any other vehicle on the roads, with its Airbump side cladding and a shed-load of other bold details.

A large panoramic sunroof features a state-of-the-art coating to filter UV light and reflect heat, and fills the cabin with diffused light.

Unique to the C4 Cactus and an instantly recognisable feature of the model is Citroën's new Airbump technology.

Fitted to the front and rear doors, the tough air-filled TPU (thermoplastic polyurethane) capsules protect against minor bumps and scrapes. Airbump panels do not need specific maintenance and reduce the stress and expense associated with car park dings and dents – cutting service and repair costs over the lifetime of the car.

While the interior looks uncluttered and without much in the way of technology, there is an awful lot discreetly placed.

Fitted as standard, the fully digital Touch Drive interface features a 7-inch touchscreen to control all the main vehicle functions. These include automatic air conditioning, media (DAB radio, audio streaming, mobile connections, music and photo storage), navigation (map view, speed limit display, traffic conditions, fuel-efficient routing), driving aids (reversing camera, park assist, speed limiter/cruise control), telephone (hands-free via Bluetooth, contacts, call management), connected services and vehicle settings.

It takes a while to get to grips with but



Looking a little like a chunky child's toy or something from Thunderbirds, it follows on from all those great quirky cars that the French company used to give us

once mastered the interface is excellent. Plus, there are some shortcut keys on either side of the main screen for practicality.

There is also a range of innovative aids available, including park assist to get into spaces and a reversing camera which displays the rear view and guidelines on the touchscreen.

Designed to reduce the cost of ownership throughout the life of the vehicle, the C4 Cactus's multi-award-winning features include a lightweight design, impressive fuel economy of up to 91.1mpg and excellent fuel emissions.

The car is offered with six efficient powertrains, four petrol – PureTech 75, PureTech 82, PureTech 82 S&S and PureTech 110 S&S – and two HDi diesels – e-HDi 92 and BlueHDi 100. Engines are mated to either five-speed manual or five or six-speed ETG (Efficient Tronic Gearbox) transmissions. All diesels are sub-100g/km of CO₂ and are eligible for free car tax. There is even a tax-exempt petrol version – the PureTech 82 S&S ETG – which emits just 98.4g/km.

While I was a little unsure about the looks, its economy and comfort won me over.



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Hot hatch Focus RS lives up to the legend

By Ed Wiseman

We've seen the photos. We remember the legends. We've slurped thirstily at every droplet of info that leaks from the Ford PR machine. But does the Focus RS live up to the legend?

The Focus RS is a blue-collar hero. Since its introduction in 2002, the RS – which stands for 'Rallye Sport' – has been the halo model for fast Ford fans in the UK. It's a nod to legendary cars like the RS1600 and the Sierra Cosworth, both of which were attainable and immensely quick.

Prices for this car start at just under £30,000, and its driving dynamics and sheer power would challenge cars costing three times that.

It's all-wheel-drive, it hits 62mph in 4.7 seconds, and it sounds like an angry lion. Ridiculous. This is the kind of car you could fall in love with – and then lease for £299 a month from your nearest Ford dealer.

It's pretty subtle until you notice the more aggressive bodywork, the spoiler above the rear windscreen, and the sculpted front and rear. The launch colour is Nitrous Blue, which accounts for most of the orders currently placed, but opting for a quieter colour will create an understated 'sleeper' car.

Ford has used some interior space to build a unique all-wheel-drive system. You lose around 60 litres from the (already mediocre) boot, and the standard seats are bulky and eat into rear passenger legroom. Splash out on the shell seats for a more comfortable cabin.

Despite being a performance-oriented car, the RS has all the mod cons you'd expect. A couple of 12v charging sockets up front, loads of stowage space, and some USB ports as well.

Brilliant

Ford has built a brilliant driver's car. They even have a metric for how 'fun' it is to rev the engine (very), and they teamed up with stunt driver and internationally-renowned boy racer Ken Block to make a car that you can mess around in.

The RS has four main driving modes. Normal, Sport, Track and Drift. If those last two words don't excite you, then you should probably stop reading, as the RS isn't for you.

'Drift' mode enables you to drive sideways in a cloud of tyre smoke. The amount of technology that has gone into creating this preposterous toy is staggering, especially considering it has no real-world application outside a deserted carpark at 2am. It's huge fun and very controllable, artificially creating predictable oversteer.

'Track' mode is where the RS really shines. Built to flatter amateurs and satisfy professionals, it really does make you look good on the track – ham-fisted driving is smoothed out by the car's powerful computer.

If you want track day success, but lack talent, this could be the car for you.

That's not to say it's for beginners. If you know what you're doing, you'll be able to get the most out this performance Ford – and goodness me, it's capable.

It costs around £30,000, going up to £33,000 if you tick every option.

For this you get one of the best-handling cars currently for sale, and the most versatile performance hatchback ever. All in a sensible, five-door, family car package that you can use every day.

Anyone who wants everyday driving fun and has £30,000 to spend on it should buy this car. You can drive it like a vanilla Focus for the most part, but every other Saturday, this family wagon will turn into a monster on the track. If you're the kind of person to occasionally take a longer, twistier, more interesting route home, then this is the car for you.

This car summed up in a single word: Bonkers.

If this car was a weapon it would be a sawn-off Purdey. Impressive craftsmanship, repurposed for use by ruffians.



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Envile B are sent packing in five overs

HAGLEY (130-5) beat Envile 'A' (87-2) by 43 runs

HAGLEY openers made a steady start – Jo Lennon was run out for 17 after falling in a heap mid-wicket. Paul Morgan was also run out following some misunderstanding.

John McDonnell, making his best score of the season and looking comfortable, continued to score with ease, while the remaining Hagley batsmen went for quick runs, sacrificing their wickets to post a decent 130.

The suicidal calling bug affected Envile too in their reply. Rhodri Parfitt was the first to go, out for 10 with the score on 29. Opener Matt Branch and Spencer Mann tried to hit the ball out of the hall through the back wall instead of working it to the angles. This was not productive and frustration built as they fell behind the scoring rate.

Branch eventually retired but took too long for his 25. Some fine bowling kept Envile in check as they finished on only 87-2.

Cookley (97-5) beat Envile 'B' (25 all out) by 72 runs

ENVILLE 'B' elected to bowl and the Cookley openers struggled to judge runs and scoring was slow.

A good opening spell from Tom Davies, three overs for 19, kept Envile in the game.

John Stanaway produced his best performance with 34 no but the remaining Cookley batsmen fell the wayside.

Envile lost three wickets in the first two overs. Opening bowlers Dan Soley and Kevin Morrissey aided by some more calamitous running between the wickets accounted for the remainder of the Envile order in five overs.

Town recover to edge thriller over Casuals

Cradley 3 Wolves Casuals 2

CRADLEY Town came back from a 2-1 deficit to edge this five-goal West Midlands League Premier thriller at home to Wolverhampton Casuals.

The hosts grabbed a second-minute goal in the topsy-turvy clash when Jovan Blake-Walker beat Casuals keeper James Scarratt with a shot on the turn from 20 yards.

Five minutes later Liam Hughes equalised for Casuals when he floated an 18-yard effort over Cradley keeper Shaun Edwards.

Casuals took control as Danny Cresswell netted at the far post from a corner after 56 minutes to go in front.

But the hosts recovered as substitute Charlie Gregg levelled with a good finish in the 71st minute. A minute later Oliver Oatley bagged the winner.

Clarke rivalry spurs on Zaber

LIGHTWEIGHT prospect Manny Zaber is being spurred on by his rivalry with stablemate Lennox Clarke as he prepares for his fourth professional outing this weekend.

The Old Hill youngster is good friends with fellow unbeaten prospect Clarke and trains alongside the Halesowen super-middleweight, who fights on the same 'Undefeated' show at Walsall Town Hall on Saturday evening.

However, he admits that friendship is put to one side when the pair are putting in the hard work.

"Lennox and I train together and we're always pushing each other in the gym and on our runs," Zaber told uko-boxing.com

"There's a good amount of healthy competition between us. I admit he's the faster sprinter but near the end of our runs I catch up. I'm the endurance man and he's the sprinter."

"Len is headlining the show this month and it'll be good to be on the same bill."

Pleased

Former White Collar fighter Zaber, who takes on Liam Richards, is aiming to be as busy as possible this year after turning professional in 2015.

"I got three quick fights in over the second half of 2015 which was decent," he said.

"I'm pleased to be fighting early in the year so I

can set up a busy 2016 of fighting – and winning – regularly."

Clarke tops the Black Country Boxing & Hatton Promotions' bill in an eagerly anticipated eight-round battle with Harlow's seasoned Richard Horton.

Ricky Hatton-trained quartet Nantwich's Nathan Gorman, Market Harborough's Ross Arnsworth, Romford's Paul Upton and Wednesbury's Sam Evans are back in action alongside Stoke's Kieron McLaren, completing the card.

Tickets are priced at £30 (general admission) and £60 (VIP Ringside), and can be purchased by calling 0845 111 2900 or directly from any boxer on the bill.

'Yozza' is counted out in defeat to Hankey

TIPTON'S Jamie Hughes was 'counted out' by fellow West Midlands darter Ted Hankey when they met in the BDO Scottish Open over the weekend.

Hankey prevailed 5-1 in their quarter-final clash at the Normandy Cosmopolitan Hotel in Renfrew.

Hughes, since his breakthrough semi-final at the World Championship, has won all of his groups on the non-television 'floor' circuit and retained the Romanian Classic.

The Black Country thrower was up and running with 3-0 whitewashes over Kevin MacAfee and Scott McConville, with a 3-1 win over Stuart Lavender getting him out of Group 33.

'Yozza' then defeated Stephen Lennon 4-1 as play was upgraded to the best-of-seven format, before shutting out John Eyre 4-0 at the last 32 stage.

The 29-year-old saw off Lakeside quarter-finalist Dennis Harcourt 4-2 to set up the clash with two-time world champion Hankey.

Hughes also reached the final of the mixed triples alongside Paula Jacklin and Chris Fider, losing out to Rachael Brooks, Sven Wens and Day Cardinal.

County players Mark Craddock and Danny Key also won their groups.

The West Midlands' Craddock whitewashed Ralph Hurst, Martin Brophy, Michael MacLean and Bruce Montgomery before a 4-3 defeat to Euan Callander.

Staffordshire's Key shut out Ronnie Jackson 3-0 before 3-2 results over Andrew Davidson and Robert Jackson, either side of a 3-1 verdict against Brian Lokken. He then lost 4-2 to Harcourt.

Sterling effort earns Tividale another draw

Tividale 1 Spalding 1

TIVIDALE earned their ninth draw of the season against a Spalding side whose sights are on the Evo-Stik Division One South play-off places.

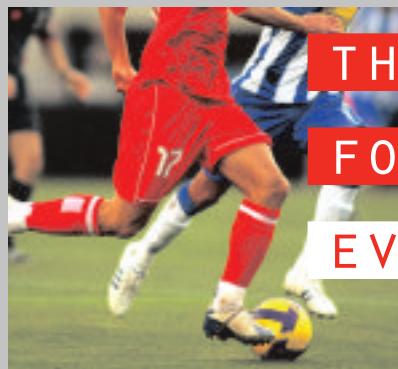
There was nothing between the sides and, if anything, the visitors took the lead against the run of play on eight minutes.

Tividale left-back Scott Devlin failed to get any distance on his headed clearance and the ball dropped nicely to Tom Waumsley. He took a couple of touches before firing past Tom Turner.

On 33 minutes Tividale were back in the game.

Chris Rabone was brought down by Paul Walker as he raced into the box and top scorer Chris Sterling stepped up to net his 15th goal of the season as keeper Michael Dugan dived the wrong way.

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Slump goes on in defeat to Dabbers

Nantwich Town 3 Halesowen Town 0
HALESOWEN Town were effectively dead and buried on the hour as Nantwich Town romped to a 3-0 Evo Stik Northern Premier League victory.

It was the Yeltz fourth defeat on the trot, with only one goal scored and nine conceded in that time.

Halesowen were undone after just 12 minutes when Andy White played the ball up to Sean Cooke on the edge of the area and he lashed it home first-time with a wide-angled shot from the right.

Elliot Osborne made it 2-0 with his 11th penalty of the season just a minute before half-time after Yeltz defender Asa Charlton was penalised for bundling over Liam Shotton. Matthew Bell added Nantwich's third goal on the hour mark after Ben Harrison drove forward through the Halesowen defence.

Borrowed

On a bad day for the Yeltz, the visitors were also forced to wear unfamiliar yellow shirts – borrowed from the hosts – after leaving their own kit back in the Black Country.

John Hill's visitors now languish in 15th place as a result with only one win from the last 12 games, while the Dabbers are three points off the play-offs after winning at the Weaver Stadium.

Following the departure of central defender Joe Hull to local rivals Stourbridge, the on-loan goalkeeper Shaun Rowley has now returned to Shrewsbury with Daniel Platt taking over between the sticks after recovering from two major injuries this season.

Frustated boss Hill felt there were few positives to take from the game, though 90 minutes for returning keeper Platt was one plus point.

Hill added he was also hoping to add to his squad after losing Hull.

Pottinger looking for Cradley to get off to flying start

CRADLEY boss Will Pottinger has called on his side to lay down a marker early in their 2016 National League campaign.

The Heathens will kick-off their season with a double header against Belle Vue on Easter Monday, March 28.

They will also face local rivals Birmingham at Perry Barr on April 20 in a meeting Pottinger is already viewing as a major opportunity to put one over on the reigning champions.

With a return to a play-off system in the third tier next season, Pottinger knows a fast start is not imperative.

But he is keen to see them send a message out to their rivals to restore their reputation as the team to beat and build some momentum early in the campaign.

"We usually have a pre-season challenge of something but we are straight into the National League meetings this year and we are excited to get started," Pottinger said.

"With the return to the play-offs it maybe isn't as important to get off to a good start."

"Having said that we are desperate to hit the ground running."

Clarke tops the bill on fight night

Page 39

Broad smiles as Leon reaches 600

Page 39



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DK see victory hopes go for a Burton



DK's Ryan Wicketts eyes up the opposition

Burton 24 DK 15

A WIN over Dudley Kingswinford lifted Burton to fifth place in Midlands One West. The game was very much in the balance at half-time and it was a good performance from Burton to secure victory.

DK opened the scoring with a try, but the conversion went wide. Burton replied with a try from Alfie Grant. Dave Archer kicked the conversion.

DK piled on the pressure in reply and produced an excellent try, the conversion attempt successful to give them a 12-7 lead.

The lead changed hands again when Josh Cartwright touched down for Burton, Archer converted

Rugby

ing. DK kept attacking though, and while overall Burton were very well disciplined a penalty cost them three points on the stroke of half-time.

However, those 14 first half points were all that DK would muster.

After the interval, a high tackle gave DK a shot at goal which was missed but tellingly Archer was able to find the target from 40m moments later.

With their noses in front, Burton's Nick Oxley squeezed in beside the left-hand corner flag and Archer's kick gave his side a nine point cushion.

Losing streak is put to an end by Stour

Stourbridge 25 Huddersfield 19

STOURBRIDGE were grateful to draw a veil over a three-match losing streak, struggling to overcome the hard-working basement side in a contest they at times looked in danger of losing.

Only very late in the game did they claw a narrow lead that was closed out with a great solo try by scrum half Toby Handley.

The visitors drew first blood with a Chris Bell penalty. Nigel Mukarati went over for Stour, but then Bell converted two more penalties.

Handley drove over in the corner and Scott slotted an excellent wide conversion before Bell's penalty reclaimed the lead. Then Scott knocked over a penalty and Handley scored in the corner.

Shrewsbury 21 Stourbridge 16

FOR the last two seasons Shrewsbury has been a hard place for the Lions. However, despite the hosts keeping a second half clean sheet, the Lions 26 first half points proved enough.

Aaron Boffey's try was converted by Sam Wilson and the score was extended with an Owen Williams try.

Captain Stuart Doolittle added a third, converted by Wilson before Shrewsbury kicked a penalty ahead of a Tibbets try, converted by Wilson.

Shrewsbury forced a further try and two penalties in the second half.

The Lions reward for Midlands Intermediate Cup quarter final success at Oadby Wigstonians is a home semi-final against Kidderminster on March 12.

The under-14s produced a St Valentine's Day Massacre, beating Kidderminster in a friendly 60-10 and the Colts had a 24-19 win over Bromsgrove in the North Midlands Colts Cup.

Next Thursday at 7.30pm, Stourton Park hosts the European Police Rugby Cup tie between Britain and France.

Glassboys dreams are ended late on

Nantwich 1 Stourbridge 0

A GOAL two minutes from time ended Stourbridge's FA Trophy run on a bitterly cold night at Nantwich Town.

The game looked to be heading for a replay when Nantwich were awarded an 88th minute free-kick.

Veteran striker Steve Jones headed home Sean Cooke's free-kick to send the Dabbers through to the next round.

The Glassboys were grateful to Gould who pulled off several top-drawer saves to keep his side in the game.

Nantwich full-back Andy White hit the post deep into stoppage time.

● Smiles – Page 39

Felicity shaken but not third



Halesowen golfer Felicity Johnson tied for second in the New Zealand Women's Open

BLACK Country golfer Felicity Johnson shrugged off the earthquake which interrupted her final round at the New Zealand Women's Open.

Johnson was standing on the sixth tee in Christchurch when the quake, measuring 5.7 on the Richter Scale, shuddered across the course. However, she kept her composure to fire in a round of 67 to finish joint second, two shots behind eventual winner and world number one Lydia Ko.

"It was a little bit surreal and like being drunk in a bar," said the Halesowen golfer.

"I was on the sixth tee and it shook quite a lot and we were rocking from side to side for

about 20-30 seconds. It did not put me off. I was on the sixth and then went on to birdie seven, eight and nine so it might have helped me."

"It was my second time in an earthquake here, so I would rather it happen on a golf course than in a hotel room, like last time."

The 28-year-old – who won in the region of £11,500 on Sunday – hopes to build on a positive performance in Adelaide, where she has now arrived ahead of the Australian Open.

But she will have to be at her very best to challenge five-time European Tour winner Ko, 18. Johnson said: "Everything about her game is very strong, she is the world number one for a reason."

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